

THE TIMES

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SHADOW OF THE THIRTIES

Alan Clark on the striking parallels between Chamberlain and Major
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PAMELLA BORDS

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Serious allegations 'must be resolved'

Speaker calls for inquiry into 'sleaze'

BY PHILIP WEBSTER AND ANDREW PIERCE

THE Speaker yesterday increased the pressure on the Government over the cash-for-questions affair by demanding a full and speedy investigation into "very serious" allegations made against MPs and ministers since the collapse of Neil Hamilton's libel case against *The Guardian*.

Betty Boothroyd said that the reputation of the whole House had been called into question and she felt very strongly that the whole issue must be resolved quickly by an inquiry that was "as transparent as possible".

Within 90 minutes, the Commons Committee on Standards and Privileges was meeting to consider her request and to hear the parliamentary watchdog Sir Gordon Downey appeal for more staff and resources to carry out a wide-ranging inquiry that could take several months.

Miss Boothroyd took some Conservative MPs by surprise with her forthright remarks. Some were irritated that she had effectively snubbed any chance of a limited inquiry and that her strong language would keep the issue in the public eye.

Ministers had hoped that any new inquiry would not include allegations that the



"Do you ever worry your kids might drift into politics?"

former government whip David Willets had tried to influence an earlier parliamentary inquiry into the cash-for-questions affair that led to Mr Hamilton's resignation as Trade Minister. But it was clear that Miss Boothroyd was leaving it to the committee to decide the scope of the allegations it considered.

Miss Boothroyd said that the standards committee should make an early report to the Commons so that "full nature and scope of any investigation it undertakes may be made known". She

promised that "all necessary steps" would be taken to ensure that the committee and Sir Gordon had enough staff.

Miss Boothroyd's intervention came as both Labour and the Liberal Democrats were pressing for a wider inquiry. Both were also urging her to rule on whether Mr Willets should be referred to Sir Gordon for allegedly trying to influence the Commons select committee on members' interests. Last night it appeared that the case of Mr Willets' memorandum on a conversation with the former committee chairman Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, would be considered by the committee but not specifically by Sir Gordon.

Sir Gordon has already started work on a report for the committee on *The Guardian's* claims that Mr Hamilton accepted cash from the Harrods owner Mohamed Al Fayed for tabling parliamentary questions. Both Mr Hamilton and Ian Greer, the lobbyist said by the newspaper to have acted as Mr Al Fayed's intermediary, have expressed their willingness to appear before Sir Gordon.

In her statement, Miss Boothroyd said: "While the House has been adjourned very serious allegations have been widely made about the conduct of a number of Members. Indeed, the reputation of the House as a whole has been called into question."

"As Speaker, I am bound to be concerned about that. It is not for me to make any kind of judgment on the merits of the complaints made. But I would not be doing my duty as Speaker if I allowed the situation to pass without saying that I believe very strongly that these matters must be resolved as soon as possible."

She added: "I will not allow allegations of misconduct to be made across the floor of the House. Wherever the complaints are heard, the members concerned are entitled to know precisely what it is they have to answer."

"The proceedings should be as transparent as possible so as to maintain public confidence. At the end of the issues ought to be resolved by a decision of this House."

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Leading article, page 21



Mary Walz: she says Barings' deputy chairman told her that she was a star

Barings 'owe me £500,000'

BY ADRIAN LEE

A FORMER director of Barings bank claimed yesterday that she was entitled to a £500,000 bonus agreed the day before Nick Leeson brought the company down with losses of £860 million.

Mary Walz, who was ultimately dismissed and criticised by the Bank of England for failing to monitor Leeson's activities, said that Barings' deputy chairman had told her that she was a "star" and she believed that the bonus agreement was "set in stone".

She is claiming that the refusal by ING, the Dutch company which rescued Barings, to pay the money was an unlawful deduction of her wages. ING says that the agreement was informal, had

not been approved at senior level and that since the bank collapsed the next day, there was no profit-sharing pool from which she could be paid.

Miss Walz, 36, of Butlers Wharf, central London, was global head of equity financial products and her responsibilities included the derivatives operation in which Leeson traded in Singapore. She joined Barings in 1992 at a salary of £80,000 plus a £160,000 bonus and the following year, her bonus rose to £300,000 on top of a £93,000 salary. On January 1, 1994, she became a director and was sent to Hong Kong to oversee the bank's Far East trading, an industrial tribunal in Stratford, east London, was told.

Miss Walz said that at 11am on February 23 last year, she was called to see the deputy chairman, Andrew Tuckey, in his 18th-floor office at Barings' Bishopsgate headquarters. She said: "I knew it would be for the formal announcement of my bonus. He handed me a slip of paper containing my name and a figure of £500,000. It was the figure I expected to see. He said something like 'Mary what can I say? You are a star'. He continued how everyone was very pleased. I thanked him."

Mr Tuckey had joked that she should "not spend it all in one place" and she replied that she might spend it on a painting. "There was no men-

Mowlam meets Maze terrorists in attempt to save ceasefire

BY NICHOLAS WATT, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

MO MOWLAM, the Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary, last night tried to shore up the loyalist ceasefire by meeting 12 Protestant paramilitary inmates at the Maze Prison.

Some of the most notorious terrorists from the Ulster Defence Association and the Ulster Volunteer Force told Ms Mowlam that their ceasefire would be maintained only if London and Dublin cracked down on the IRA. The prisoners, who included Michael Stone, the UDA triple murderer, also called for loyalist inmates to be freed early as a reward for supporting the ceasefire in the face of renewed IRA terrorism.

She also met Johnny Adair, the first terrorist to be convicted under a new charge of directing terrorism when he was sentenced to 16 years in September last year. Today she will pass on the prisoners' concerns to Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

Ms Mowlam, who was praised by Conservative MPs last night for her unprecedented meeting at the prison on the outskirts of Belfast, said she hoped her talks would underpin the loyalist ceasefire. She said: "I went to listen to their concerns and to tell them of the public support and growing respect for those loyalists who are working hard to maintain their ceasefire."

She added: "It has been tough for them to hold it. Every atrocity makes it harder for them... All I can do is to push this forward. I never cease to be impressed by the attitude of loyalists."

The names of Michael Stone and Johnny Adair are among the most notorious of loyalist terrorists. The pair were instrumental in giving the Ulster Defence Association a reputation for brutal, cold-

blooded murder in the final years of its campaign before the 1994 ceasefire.

Stone entered loyalist folklore in 1988 when he ambushed the funeral in West Belfast of three IRA terrorists who had been shot dead by the SAS in Gibraltar. Mourners at the Milltown Cemetery covered in terror as Stone killed three mourners, including a member of the IRA. He said that he had intended to murder Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, the leaders of Sinn Féin. After Stone



Adair: among most brutal of loyalist terrorists

was jailed for 30 years. Adair took over his mantle as Ulster's most brutal loyalist terrorist.

An agenda for the start of serious multi-party talks on the future of Northern Ireland was close to settlement last night after an important breakthrough.

As Sir Patrick pledged that republicans could not bomb their way to the negotiating table, David Trimble's Ulster Unionists and John Hume's SDLP agreed the agenda for the opening plenary session at Stormont.

The proposed agenda was put before the other parties for their approval.

Blair leads crusade for family values

BY OUR POLITICAL EDITOR

TONY BLAIR yesterday reopened the battle for the moral high ground in politics with a pledge that the aim of every department in a Labour government would be to support family and community life.

In a speech in South Africa he said that his dream of the decent society in Britain would be built on the values of a strong family unit.

He defended the plans put forward by Jack Straw, the Shadow Home Secretary, for child curfews. He said parents had a responsibility to know where their children were and what they were doing. "I can see no reason at all for young children to be out on their own at night, and I can see many reasons why they should not be — not least their own safety. We are examining

measures to tackle this. Some have called it curfew. I call it child protection."

Mr Blair denied that there was any comparison with John Major's "back to basics" campaign. "This is not some cry for a return to Victorian values but a call for a return to the basic decent values my generation grew up with but which have been eroded."

Last night the Conservatives hit back, saying that the speech was "new rhetoric with policies firmly rooted on the tradition of the nanny state." Brian Mawhinney, the Tory chairman, said it was "just a cover up for saying Labour will interfere in people's lives". It was "phony Tony the TV evangelist".

Leading article, page 21

The Times
Owing to technical difficulties, some classified sections have been omitted from today's Times.

Today's Times overseas
Australia \$14.00, Belgium 8 Frs 80,
Canada \$13.50, Denmark 18.00,
Cyprus £1.20, France 14.00,
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Dunblane report 'fails to back total handgun ban'

BY JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LORD CULLEN is believed to have stepped back from calling for a total ban on handguns in his Dunblane massacre report, opting for less draconian controls.

Ministers were said to be "relaxed" about the 200-page report, which was delivered to the Government in the early hours yesterday. They are expected to agree at a Cabinet committee meeting this morning to go ahead instead with a ban on storing handguns at home. The compromise will anger campaigners in Dunblane who want a total ban.

Lord Cullen conducted a five-week inquiry after Thom-

as Hamilton shot dead 16 children and a teacher at Dunblane Primary School in March before killing himself.

Tomorrow Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, who commissioned the inquiry, and Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, will publish the report and the government response. Laws to ban guns being kept at home are expected to be included in next week's Queen's Speech. The measures are expected to get through the Commons easily as they are backed by Labour and the Liberal Democrats.

Officials from the Scottish Office, the Home Office and

Downing Street yesterday discussed the report's recommendations and any implications of even a partial ban.

One problem that could arise from a ban on guns at home is a wave of compensation claims. Although the Government fought these bitterly after the Hungerford massacre, they had to pay out £600,000. A total handgun ban has been estimated to mean a £140 million bill.

Ministers are expected to recommend a tighter security regime and stricter licensing procedures.

Gun club fears, page 10

Earth cooling off after climate flip

BY NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

A SHARP cooling of the planet occurred this year, reversing the warming trend that began in the early 1980s, Meteorological Office scientists say.

Dr Phil Jones of the University of East Anglia and Dr Dave Parker of the office's Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research said the dip in temperature was due to a phenomenon known as the North Atlantic oscillation which has flipped for the first time in ten to 15 years.

During most years, there is low pressure over Iceland and a high over the Azores in the winter months. It means that westerly winds dominate blowing over the British Isles

and into northern Europe and Russia.

But this year there was a "flip" similar to the famous freezing winter of 1963, with a high between Scotland and Iceland and low in the Azores leading to easterly winds sweeping in from Siberia and the Arctic. These led to freezing Siberian winds blasting most of Canada and northern Europe, including Britain over Christmas and during the early part of the year.

This year will be 0.2 to 0.15 degrees C cooler than 1995, the hottest year on record, and 1990, the second hottest.

Forecast, page 26



Planning for independence

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Cereal stalker fails to dish Bottomley

"I'm only too easy to meet," cried Virginia Bottomley to a crowd of startled MPs, regathered after the summer recess yesterday, "in any number of settings."

What could the fragrant Mrs Bottomley mean? What settings did she have in mind? Parascending? Boating on the Serpentine? Call me unimpressive, but a cup of tea in her office would surely do.

The Heritage Secretary had been goaded into this surprising offer by her Labour Shadow, John Cunningham. At Questions yesterday, he asked her to confirm that for £500 one could have joined Mrs Bottomley at breakfast during her party's conference last week at Bournemouth. "Is

that proper?" In fact, Mr Cunningham was taking something of a liberty with these reports.

It seems Tories with funds to spare were being invited to sponsor the breakfast, but those with no more than loose change to offer were still permitted to approach the great lady at the mesli bar. Still, Cunningham decided to take a crack and who can blame him?

Unable to decide whether to be indignant or dismissive, Mrs B decided to be coquettish. So cheery a picture did she paint of her approachability at breakfast, at tea-time or at any other time, that one wondered where she finds any time at all to be Heritage



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

Secretary. This merry informality she contrasted with the "£1,000 Labour charge for nosh-ups with Tony Blair in Park Lane".

It seems an odd reversal of the old certainties, much in keeping with John Major's attacks on the old school tie brigade on Labour's front bench. Time was when a Tory would have boasted how expensive they were to dine with, not how cheap. When Tam Dalyell returned to the subject minutes later, Mrs Bottomley went further. For

most breakfasters at Bournemouth, she insisted, "it cost only £7.50 to join her."

And there was more. "I am available at virtually every major tourist event."

Really? The Changing of the Guards and Mrs Bottomley? Bottomley at Stonehenge? Bottomley among the Crown Jewels? Bottomley at the Zoo? At your picnic at Henley? Leading the donkey rides at Cleethorpes? There can only be one logical conclusion to Mrs Bottomley's dash for crowd appeal.

Can Mystic Mcg's contract with the BBC be safe for much longer?

MPs had reconvened yesterday to be told of the death of Terry Patchett. They knew already, of course, but by custom these announcements are made immediately after prayers and before the business of the day. "I regret to have to report to the House the death of Terry Patchett," said Betty Boothroyd, in a tone respectful but perfectly matter-of-fact, "the Member for Barnsley East." And, after a terse message of condolence, that was that. The House moved on.

In *The Literary Companion to Parliament*, an anthology shortly to be published by

Sindair-Stevenson, the editor, Christopher Silvester, quotes Norman Shrapnel, the *Manchester Guardian's* great sketchwriter, on 8 July 1960: "I regret to have to inform the House, the Speaker told the Commons when it met yesterday, of the death of the Right Honourable Aneurin Bevan, the Member for Ebbw Vale."

It was, writes Shrapnel, "a frequent sort of announcement, usually applying to some devoted backbencher of whom the public has scarcely heard." Its very informality, he adds, its unvarying manner and timing, serve as acknowledgement "that all men are equal at this point in their career."

Hospital doctor dies of Aids-related illness

A young anaesthetist who took part in hundreds of operations over four years has died of an Aids-related illness. Wigan and Leigh Health Services NHS Trust said that, although he helped surgeons to administer drugs using a syringe there was no risk of his blood passing to patients.

The doctor, who came to Britain from the Indian sub-continent, worked at Royal Albert Edward Infirmary, Leigh Infirmary and Billinge Hospital. Before that he worked in Yorkshire, Humberside and Kent. He told his employers that he had Aids only last Wednesday, two days before his death.

Hague escapes by helicopter

The Welsh Secretary, William Hague, was rescued by helicopter when 100 farmers protesting against the Government's handling of BSE used tractors, muck-spreaders and other machinery to blockade roads at Crymch, Dyfed. Mr Hague, who was visiting a school, was taken by police helicopter to his next engagement, at Cardigan.

Two die as new road opens

Two people died in a crash on a new dual carriageway three hours after it was opened by the Transport Minister John Wats. A tanker, a saloon car and a mini-bus collided on the A249 Sheppey link road near Sittingbourne, Kent. The road cost £35 million to build and workers had just finished removing barriers when the accident happened.

Quinlivan detained by police

Nessan Quinlivan, the IRA terrorist who escaped from Brixton Prison in 1991, was arrested in the Irish Republic yesterday. Quinlivan, 31, was detained with another man in Limerick City under the Offences Against the State Act. He can be held for 48 hours without charge. Quinlivan is currently on bail awaiting an appeal against extradition to Britain.

LSE rejects higher fees

A plan to charge students at the London School of Economics up to £1,500 in course fees has been abandoned by the governors, who want more time to consider how "top-up" fees would affect those from low-income backgrounds. The LSE has also decided not to charge a £300 entry levy in 1997 if cuts in funding are not restored.

Runaway girl sought by police

A man has disappeared with his landlady's ten-year-old daughter after offering to take her for a walk. Paul Husbands, 51, is thought to have planned to run away with Ann-Marie Radbourne after taking extra clothing from her home in Paignton, Devon, where he had lodged for two months. He was last seen leaving the house with her at 11.30am on Sunday. Police are appealing for him to contact them.



Guerin police claim progress

Police investigating the murder of crime journalist Veronica Guerin in Dublin said they have seized more than 100 guns, broken up three criminal gangs, seized £500,000 in cash and cannabis worth £600,000 since the shooting in June. Detectives said the killing is not thought to have been carried out by contract killers, as first believed, but by gunmen acting on the orders of a known crime boss.

Dangerous double killer on run

A double killer was still on the run last night after absconding last month from an open prison where he was being prepared for release. David Burgess, 49, walked out of Leyhill open prison near Bristol where he was being detained for the murder of two nine-year-old girls in 1967. Police in Avon and Somerset described him as dangerous.

MPs to congratulate Damon Hill

MPs will be asked today to sign an early day motion tabled by the Labour MP Richard Burden to congratulate Damon Hill and his team on winning the Formula One World Championship. More than 1.5 million viewers got up before 4.45am on Sunday to watch the BBC's live broadcast of Hill's victory in the Japanese Grand Prix at Suzuka.

Critics dismiss proposed safeguards for independence as inadequate

FO backs Birt plans for World Service

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY AND CAROL MIDGLEY

JOHN BIRT'S shake-up of the BBC World Service was broadly endorsed by Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, last night in the face of widespread criticism of the reforms.

An independent report into the changes urged Mr Birt, the BBC Director-General, to introduce various safeguards to protect the World Service but did not oppose the main proposals to merge the service with other BBC news departments. Mr Birt faced widespread criticism from senior World Service managers and MPs after he announced radical restructuring to cut costs. Under the plans, English language programmes, which make up one-fifth of the output, are to be commissioned

from BBC Productions or independent producers, while news is to be commissioned from BBC News.

Critics have claimed that the changes would "rip the heart out of the World Service". But yesterday Mr Rifkind met Sir Christopher Bland, chairman of the BBC, to agree that the reforms should go ahead with safeguards to ensure the service's future independence.

Last night opponents of the restructuring said the measures were too weak. Stephen Parker, of Save the World Service, said: "The actual ethos, the fundamental factor that makes the World Service so distinctive, will be lost."

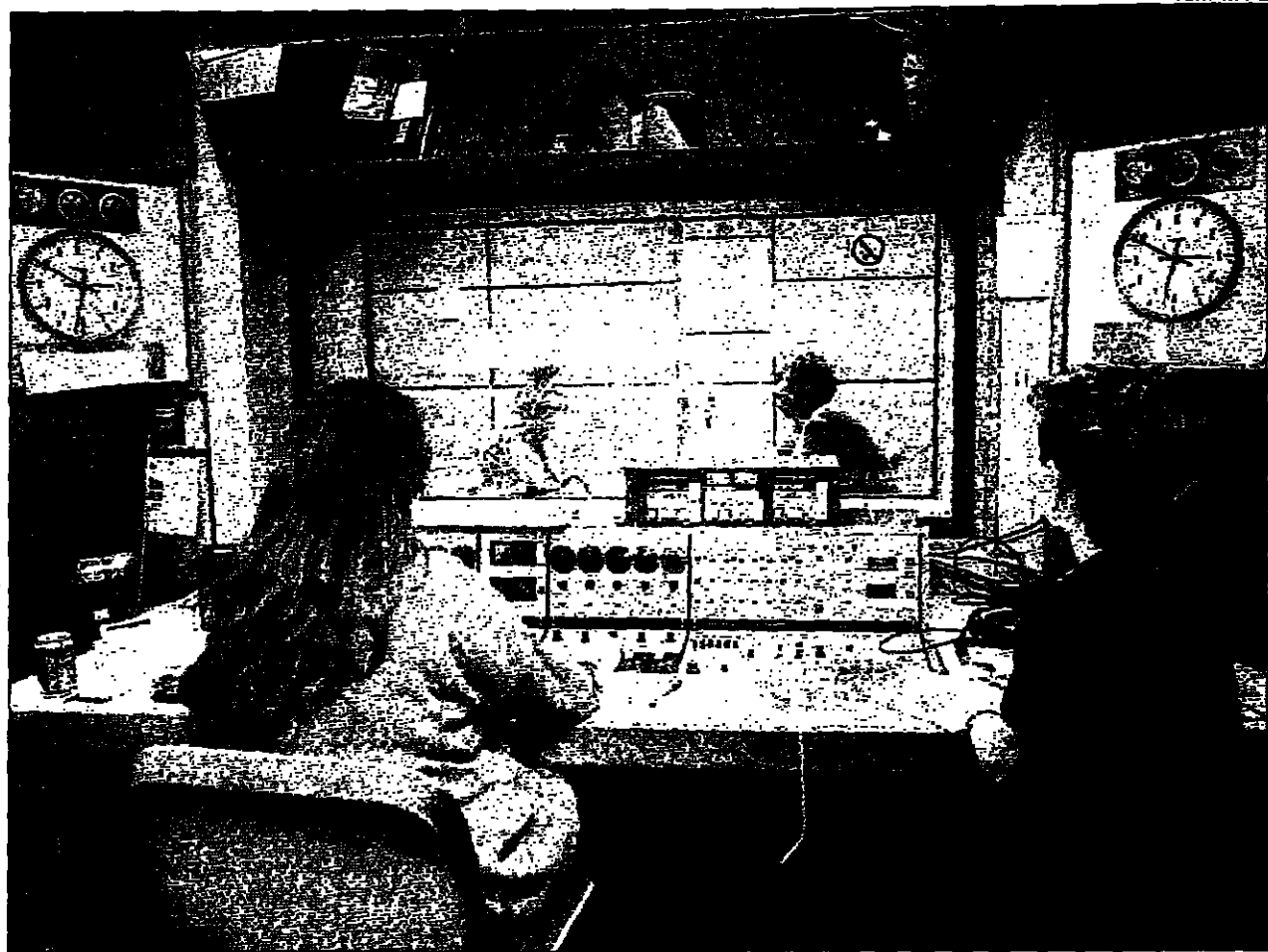
"That is very much based upon the people here at Bush House and they will be lost because a sizeable number will be working in other parts of the BBC."

John Tusa, the former head of the World Service and a staunch opponent of the plans, was also said to be disappointed at the compromise.

But Mr Birt said: "The process has strengthened the World Service, helped safeguard the quality and ethos of a service we all value."

Sir Christopher added: "We welcome the clear and explicit safeguards contained in the working group's report; we believe we now have a firm foundation for the detailed planning and implementation of the reorganisation process."

Mr Birt faced a formidable



The World Service will leave Bush House, under plans endorsed by Malcolm Rifkind yesterday

protest campaign involving prominent public figures, over his plans. He said the news operations of the World Service and the domestic BBC would be merged under one roof. The World Service would move from its historic home Bush House to be produced from the BBC's television headquarters in west London, in a move which would save money and improve the service. Critics said it split the end of the World Service's editorial independence.

Although the report by the working group set up in the wake of the furore insists that the World Service should be a dedicated unit, it does not oppose a merger. Foreign Office sources acknowledged that the World Service staff would move to White City

from Bush House but said they would operate as a separate unit.

The report says the main priority must be to keep together the team producing English World Service news and current affairs programmes and services in foreign languages. Although the authors of the report recognised that there might be a period when the two sections were separated as staff moved to a new headquarters, they emphasised that the period should be kept to a minimum.

Campaigners said last night there had been no significant changes to Mr Birt's plans. "We have still to be convinced. There is still a lot of concern," said one BBC insider.

Radio and TV, pages 50, 51

Tusa calls for TV news to show reality of war

THE "ghastly reality" of war must not be hidden from British television viewers, a former head of the BBC World Service said yesterday. John Tusa also said the news networks must avoid "a pornography of violence".

Speaking at an awards ceremony for freelance cameramen, Mr Tusa said: "Bloodstains on the ground or a small crater are wholly inadequate substitutes for the actuality of multiple killings. It is an evasion to say that they are and a misuse of the bravery of camera crews and journalists, whether they are

freelance or not, to say that they are."

He went on: "We must avoid a pornography of violence, where networks start to compete with one another in the amount of gore they show. But when some viewers complain about violence on the news, when it is an essential part of the knowledge needed to assess what is happening, I believe the only answer is to say, 'I'm sorry, we will not censor the ghastly reality, for that is the only way that you the voters, the citizens, can be properly informed about the world.'"

Baldry squares up for fight with EU over Spanish 'quota hopping'

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN LUXEMBOURG

EUROPE'S fishing ministers yesterday rejected a call by Brussels for a 40 per cent cut in the fish catch but Britain set the scene for a fight with the rest of the union over "quota-hopping" Spanish trawlers.

Bombarded with criticism by ministers, Emma Bonino, the Fisheries Commissioner, edged away from her insistence last spring on a fierce cut in the fishing fleet. Officials said the Commission could accept a reduction in fleet of about 15 per cent provided measures were in place to

ensure a heavier reduction in the catch over six years, especially of endangered stocks, such as cod, haddock and sardines. Philippe Vasseur, the French Agriculture Minister, said he believed the ministers would eventually settle by the end of the year on a 10 per cent reduction in the fleet with measures to ensure conservation.

Britain staked out ground for conflict by saying it refused to contemplate any reduction in fleet capacity until the EU barred quota-hopping, the practice under which Spanish vessels have bought rights to fish from British quotas. The

European Court rejected a British appeal against the practice and London is insisting on reversing the law with a protocol in the revised Maas-tricht treaty, now under negotiation. Tony Baldry, the Fisheries Minister, told the other ministers that it was "crazy" that Spanish vessels should be taking a fifth of Britain's allowed catch.

He became involved in a testy exchange with Loyola de Palacio, the Spanish minister, after she interrupted him to reject the suggestion that Spanish vessels were involved in "piracy". Britain's insistence on quotas jarred

with its support for the free movement of goods and capital in the European Single Market, she said.

Since the European treaty negotiations will not end until next June at the earliest, Britain is likely to be out-voted over fishing capacity as early as December. The new fishing programme, to run from 1997, is determined by qualified majority vote, a system that gives Britain no veto power.

Mr Baldry insisted that Britain would not disobey the law but did not explain how it could still refuse "to contemplate" any reduction in its capacity.

Barings 'star' claims £500,000

Continued from page 1

tion of the award being provisional or requiring any further approval." The next day, Leeson's losses were uncovered and Miss Walz was subsequently told that the bonus would not be paid.

Miss Walz was held to be partly to blame for Leeson's actions, and on May 1 she was summoned to the 20th floor and presented with two letters: one of resignation, the other of dismissal. She said she chose to be fired because there was no financial inducement to resign.

Miss Walz said that she understood her annual bonus was guaranteed, whatever the company's performance. It was not feasible that Mr Tuckey would have communicated the bonus figure to her if it were provisional. "Mr Tuckey was simply the boss."

Anthony Sendall, for Miss Walz, said that the bonus was due to be paid in two tranches — £20,000 and £480,000 — for tax reasons. By offering her the bonus, or

at least the expectation of one, Barings had entered into a contract. "We say that notification took place on 23rd February 1995. "We say the bonus then became contractual."

Bonuses were entirely expected by Barings' staff and were frequently many times higher than the basic salary; in 1993 the company's "bonus pool" for all its employees was almost £100m, roughly half the profits.

Mr Nicholas Underhill, QC, for ING Barings, said that it was preposterous that anyone in Miss Walz's position should expect a bonus for a year in which the company suffered huge losses.

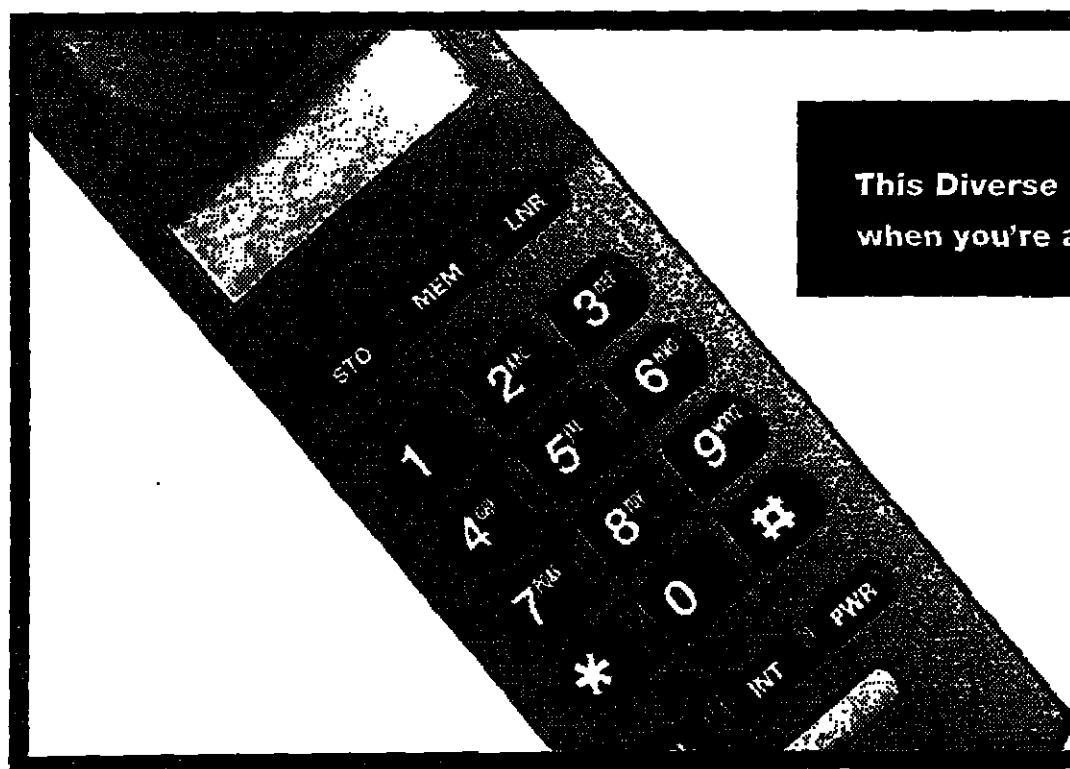
"This is a surprising claim. What is surprising is that Barings' global head of equity financial products can claim to be entitled to receive a bonus in respect of a period in which Barings' derivatives division in Singapore had made catastrophic losses that drove the bank into insolvency. It would be surprising if she

was entitled to a bonus in these circumstances whether or not she was culpable." tion of the award being provisional or requiring any further approval.

Mr Underhill thought there could be no dispute that she had "some responsibility" for Leeson, even if not in every respect. "It was the evening following Miss Walz's being given her slip of paper that the balloon went up." But that was a side issue. "It is quite incredible she could have a legitimate expectation of payment of bonus at that time. There are serious criticisms of her conduct."

She had not, however, been singled out in having her bonus refused. No other Barings employee was given a bonus under the company profit-share scheme that year. Some employees, not tainted by the scandal and retained by ING, were given a different sort of bonus from ING funds as a form of "handicuffs" to ensure that they stayed with the bank.

The hearing continues today.



warning:

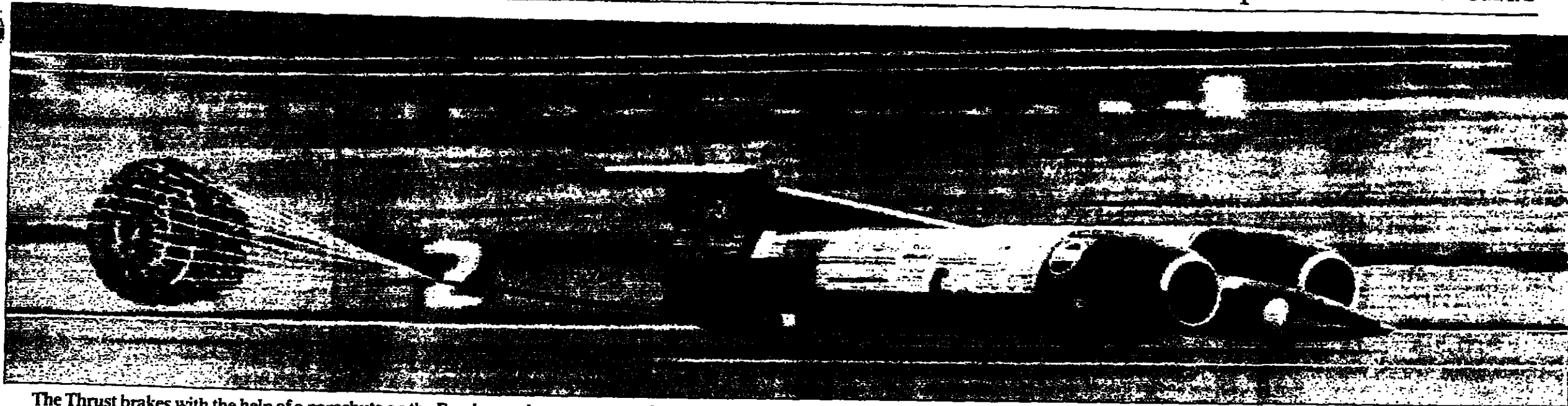
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BT It's good to talk

Tornado fighter pilot enjoys the ride as Britain's Thrust blasts from 0 to 200mph in a few seconds



The Thrust brakes with the help of a parachute on the Farnborough runway yesterday. At the controls was Flight Lieutenant Andy Green, below, who usually pilots a Tornado jet. Picture by CHRIS HARRIS

Rocket car cleared for take-off on way to drive speed record through sound barrier

By ALAN CUPPS

THE British car designed to push the land-speed record beyond the sound barrier reached 200 miles an hour on the runway at Farnborough airfield yesterday as its team prepared to set off for full-scale testing in the Jordanian desert.

The ten-tonne Thrust SSC, powered by twin Rolls-Royce jet engines, took just a few seconds to reach the maximum speed permitted along the runway at the Defence Engineering and Research Agency in Hampshire.

It was driven by Flight Lieutenant Andy Green, the RAF Tornado pilot selected to make the

attempt to break the current record of 633mph held by Richard Noble, the director of the Thrust project.

Flight Lieutenant Green said a series of test runs on the 8,000ft Farnborough runway had demonstrated the car's stability and that it had proved surprisingly easy to drive. The stability is ensured by an array of computer-controlled hydraulic systems.

Although the timing of the record attempt has now slipped by more than a year from its original schedule, Mr Noble said he was confident the car would be ready to break his existing record at a subsonic speed of around 650mph during the team's month-long stay

at the Al-Jafr airbase in Jordan. The attempt on the speed of sound, 750mph, is now expected to take place early next year in the Black Rock Desert, Nevada.

Mr Noble admitted that the Thrust project faced a formidable rival in Craig Breedlove, the veteran American record-breaker, who has just completed test runs at 400mph on the Bonneville Salt Flats in his latest car, Spirit of America, also designed to break the sound barrier. He is now expected to move to the Blackrock Desert to make an attempt on that speed as soon as possible.

The Jordanian test site offered a harder and more consistent surface and more reliable weather

than the American track, said Mr Noble. But maximum speed was limited because at 10.2 miles the Al-Jafr track is shorter than Blackrock. Breedlove is expected to need at least 14 miles in his attempt.

Yesterday's test was the last public appearance of Thrust SSC in Britain before the car and its supporting equipment is packed into a giant Antonov transport aircraft for the flight to Jordan. The car will first have to be transported by road to Stansted airport in Essex because the fully laden Antonov could not take off from Farnborough.

Hill's morning after, page 52



Olympic bobsleigh driver given life ban for using steroids

By JOHN GOODBODY
SPORTS NEWS
CORRESPONDENT

MARK TOUT, Britain's Olympic bobsleigh driver, has been banned from the sport for life after testing positive for anabolic steroids.

Tout, 35, a former corporal in the Royal Tank Regiment, has become the first British competitor in any Winter Olympics sport to test positive for drugs. He has been banned for taking stanozolol, an anabolic steroid that the Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson was using when he was stripped of the world record and Olympic 100 metres title in Seoul in 1988.

Tout, from London, had been training to take part in the 1998 Games in Nagano. They would have been his fifth Winter Olympics, something no other Briton has achieved. He was the driver of both the four-man and two-man bobs, which finished fifth and sixth respectively at the 1994 Games in Lillehammer. It was his ambition to end his career with an Olympic medal.

Tout was caught after a random out-of-competition test last month in Britain, supervised by sampling officers of the Sports Council. He said yesterday: "I felt I wouldn't be caught, otherwise I wouldn't have done it. I will



Tout believed that he would not be caught

not be appealing against the decision. I have to pick myself up again and throw myself into survival."

Speaking on BBC radio he said: "I completely regret doing it. I have seen what has happened to other people and their careers. I would not want anybody to feel how I feel at the moment. At the same time I am not blind. I am an educated adult. I see what goes on in the world and I see what goes on in sport in general. You have to take your own view on that."

"I feel like I have failed. I have come a long way in the sport and we have worked very, very hard to achieve that

I feel that I have spoiled that by making a silly mistake and personally I feel that I have failed because I have come so close and now won't get the chance to complete the picture."

The British Bobsleigh Association's regulation of a life-ban is among the harshest in British sport. Most governing bodies have only a four-year ban for a first offence, even for a serious case such as anabolic steroids, the hormone drugs that help competitors to build muscle and recover more quickly from intensive exercise.

Bobsleigh has been dominated in Britain by members of the Armed Forces. They have the time for hours of weight-training to develop the power to push the bob as fast as possible and for the months of practice in countries such as Switzerland, Austria and France. Britain does not have a bobsleigh run.

Johnny Woodall, a former British champion and Army major, said: "I am totally amazed by the news. Tout has had enough negative tests for this to be the most extraordinary bolt out of the blue. Maybe he was feeling as he gets older that his performance was suffering and he needed to do something to boost it. But I cannot believe it had been going on very long."

Provost resigns over new battle of Flodden

By IAN MURRAY
COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENT

A CAMPAIGN by two women to take part in a male-dominated ceremony dating back to the Scottish defeat at Flodden in 1513 led a council leader to resign yesterday.

Tom Hogg stepped down as provost of the Scottish border town of Hawick rather than fight the women in the sexual discrimination case which they are bringing. The Equal Opportunities Commission is due to decide next week whether it will back the women's case, but has already told them that it has sympathy for their cause.

Mr Hogg said yesterday in a letter of resignation that he was facing an unprecedented situation with which none of his predecessors had been forced to grapple.

"I have a deep belief in the traditions and customs from which Hawick has grown, and



Women at war: Miss Simpson, left, and Ms Graham

I cannot and will not betray these now," he wrote in his letter of resignation. "God knows that I've tried every minute of these last six months to resolve the issue that's tearing my town apart, but it remains unresolved."

As provost, Mr Hogg, 50, was in charge of the town's Common Riding festival, a series of 16 rides in June to commemorate a successful charge by boys of the town against a camp of English soldiers after the battle of Flodden. That ride is believed to have saved Hawick from being sacked and an annual festival has been held around the date to commemorate the event. Only men, however, have been allowed to take part other than for a short period between 1926 and 1931, when a number of women were allowed to join in by special

invitation. No invitations were issued after that because one of the women taking part fell off, broke a leg and delayed the proceedings.

This year, however, Ashley Simpson and Mandy Graham, two horseriding enthusiasts from the town, decided to take part. "It was something I have always wanted to do," Miss Simpson, 23, said yesterday. "We were showered with abuse as we rode out, being called 'scum' and 'whore'. I have had a pint of beer tipped over me in a pub since then. But I think that this is a celebration for the whole town and not just for men. It is my history as much as theirs. I am not a feminist. I just want to participate."

However, Frank Scott, secretary of the Common Riding, said: "If women took part it would spoil everything."

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**FROM GILES WHITTELL
IN LOS ANGELES**

The Irish director Neil Jordan had delivered "a fantasia on historical themes" instead of "rigorous and nuanced honesty", *Time* magazine concluded.



Liam Neeson in *Michael Collins*, which opened in the US at the weekend

General Rose could be outflanked for top post

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

The apparent rivalry for the most senior post between General Rose and General Wheeler has arisen because of the widespread expectation



Rose: reputation for inspired leadership

Some in the MoD are cautioning against his ap-

General Wheeler, a member of an established military family, is Commander-in-Chief Land Command, responsible for the fighting element of the Army — about 67,500 troops. He took up the appointment in March after three years as General Officer Commanding, Northern Ireland. His first commission was into his father's regiment, The Royal Ulster Rifles.

CSA introduces new criteria to payment rules

By Valerie Elliott, Whitehall Editor

Among the cases highlighted by Sir William Reid, the Parliamentary Commissioner

Most problems concerned errors and delays in dealing with applications from women for child-support maintenance. In one case, the CSA was so slow that the father in question had been made redundant by the time it was ready to assess his maintenance payments.

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Voyage through time: Richard Grimble with the yacht he has painstakingly restored after dragging it from the mud 21 years ago, below

How a Victorian beauty rose from a muddy grave

BY ROBIN YOUNG

A BOAT enthusiast who, 21 years ago, dug out a derelict Victorian yacht from the mud of an Essex estuary with his bare hands has been told that the vessel could now be worth more than £1 million.

Richard Grimble, 58, bought the crumbling remains of the Victorian yacht *Sorceress* for £1,000 in 1975 and has spent much of his time since rebuilding and refitting her in every detail. *Sorceress* began life as a gentleman's yacht in 1878 and during the following half century had 15 owners, all wealthy and mostly titled. She appeared at Cowes and Edward VII and the future George V are believed to have been among those who were entertained on board.

But after *Sorceress* was acquired by the Earl of Mac-

clesfield her golden days faded. The earl used the boat infrequently and eventually decided to retire her to a mud berth on the Colne estuary at Wivenhoe, where she remained, sinking into the mire, from 1928 until 1975.

Mr Grimble, a violin restorer from Raitonham in Kent, found the yacht through an advertisement in *Exchange & Mart*. He said yesterday: "I had been looking for a boat for a long time. This was a bit bigger than I wanted, but it was beautiful and at £1,000 cheap compared to others I had looked at."

"We waded out waist-high in mud to dig the boat out with our bare hands. The locals thought it pretty amusing, but they grew quite fond of us when they saw the effort we put in."

A channel to the river was dug out and, eventually, at one high tide *Sorceress* slipped clear. Her deck and hull were largely unaffected by long burial in the sludge but everything inside had rotted away. The boat was taken to Mr Grimble's workshop, where he brought to its restoration the meticulous attention to detail that he applies to his work on musical instruments.

Joinery and veneers have been restored to Victorian designs and metalwork no longer in production has been commissioned from specialists or made by Mr Grimble himself. He has

restored every detail of the interior to its Victorian design, installing subtle lighting, plumped furnishings and a genuine Victorian hipbath.

The result is a vessel with all the sumptuous grace and elegance of the kind of yacht that thrilled marine artists at the turn of the century. The restored *Sorceress* is now among the most authentic aristocratic yachts of her vintage still afloat. Her present value is therefore a matter of some speculation. It is also Mr Grimble's interest only, because the yacht is not for sale.

"It has been a labour of love," he said. "The amount the boat is worth is irrelevant. Insurers tell me it is worth £1.5 million to £2 million, but that is not what I am thinking about. I love our heritage and what I wanted to do was to restore something of great beauty and maintain it."

He added: "We cannot even go sailing in the yacht yet. We still need another £2,000 for the sails."

A yacht surveyor, Bob Forsyth of Southampton, said: "I would estimate that as a yacht in itself *Sorceress* could fetch anything from £500,000 to £1 million, but Richard has done so much work on the interior that it could fetch a lot more at auction." The yacht is now on display at Chatham Historic Dockyard, Kent.

Sailing 'widow', page 47



Edward VII was among guests on the *Sorceress*



Bar committee decision 'perverse'

Defeated professor attacks rival chosen to train barristers

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

TWO prominent law professors who were bidding to run the training course for barristers have come to verbal blows in the wake of the Bar's decision in July to end its monopoly on training.

The Bar decided to approve universities to run the one-year vocational course that had been provided by the Inns of Court School of Law. Six institutions, as well as the Inns of Court, won approval to offer training, an essential stepping stone to the profession.

The College of Law, the leading provider of training for solicitors, was successful but the joint bid by Oxford University and Oxford Brookes was rejected. Professor Peter Birks, Regius Professor of Civil Law at All Souls, Oxford, who was behind Oxford's failed bid, has published an extraordinary attack on the decision to approve the College of Law, headed by Professor Nigel Savage.

In an unsigned editorial in the newsletter of the Society of Public Teachers of Law, Professor Birks says The College of Law — one of the biggest providers of training for solicitors — has no research expertise. The institution "Mr Savage now leads would

achieve a zero-rating", he says. In spite of having no research responsibilities, it would retain a "near monopoly" of legal training.

Professor Birks said yesterday: "I can't imagine a more perverse, inexplicable decision." He said that he had no wish to make a personal attack on Professor Savage, who has risen rapidly to become one of the most powerful voices in legal education.

He said it was the Bar decision, taken by a committee under Sir David Calcutt, QC, that he was concerned about. It was "the most extraordinary decision I have known in my whole life".

Professor Birks said he had spent eight years trying to get the research-based universities into the second stage of training lawyers. A few universities now offered the solicitors' training course but the Bar decision to devolve barristers' training had "presented a golden opportunity to say 'we need research-based training', and they refused it".

Professor Savage said the attack amounted to sour grapes. "Neither Oxford University nor Oxford Brookes has any track record in delivering vocational education for law-

yers. This was very much Professor Birks's dream and it has failed to become a reality."

To attack the college for lack of research was misplaced because it was not its core activity. "But that is precisely why Oxford is struggling and why they got a zero from the Bar Council — vocational education is not their core activity." If Oxford's course was so excellent, it would have been approved, he said.

He also questioned the wisdom, from the taxpayer's point of view, of Oxford devoting resources to vocational training when it was a world leader in research and undergraduate teaching. The money might have been better spent on research on litigation, civil evidence and other practice-related subjects, he said.

The institutions running the course, apart from the Inns of Court School of Law, are The College of Law, based in London, York, Guildford and Chester; Nottingham Law School (Professor Savage's former institution); BPP Law School, in London; Cardiff Law School; the University of Northumbria and the University of the West of England.

Law, pages 39, 41

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Girl's letter led to jail for teacher

A Sunday-school teacher who was exposed as a child abuser by a nine-year-old girl's letter to a teenage magazine's agony aunt was jailed yesterday for 12 months. Stephen Williams, 34, was found guilty of three specimen counts of indecency on one girl and another count of indecency on another girl at Bolton Crown Court last month. The unposted letter was found by her brother.

Pollution fine

South West Water was fined £1,000 after admitting polluting a Cornish river with sewage. The company blamed salt water in the system and said it would spend £3 million to prevent recurrence.

Firework blast

The owner of a garden centre fled for his life as his firework stock exploded. John Pearson spotted an office blaze spreading to the store at the Burston rose and garden centre, Chiswell Green, St Albans.

Protest punch

Edward Gilder, 50, a livestock transport boss whose firm has been the target of animal rights protests, was bound over by Cheltenham magistrates for punching a TV cameraman in the face.

Sangster sale

The horseracing businessman Robert Sangster has sold his home on the Isle of Man for £2.5 million. The property, on the outskirts of Douglas, was put on the market four years ago for £6 million.

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Brother in mercy killing escapes prison sentence

By A Staff Reporter

A MAN who killed his brother to end his suffering from a degenerative illness walked free from court yesterday.

The case, involving the first known mercy killing to come before the Scottish courts, was described as "exceptional" by the judge. Lord Macfadyen said he had considered a custodial sentence to make it plain to others that taking a life was unlawful, but there had been powerful mitigating factors.

Paul Brady, 37, who killed his brother James, 40, at his request on Boxing Day last year, was appearing for sentence in the High Court in Glasgow. He had originally been charged with murder but, three weeks ago, the Crown accepted a plea of guilty to the lesser charge of culpable homicide.

The family suffers from the hereditary disease, Huntington's chorea. Brady's grandfather and mother died from it, and in 1985 his brother was diagnosed as suffering from it. The court had been told that James Brady had pleaded with his sister Margaret to end his misery, but she had refused. He was allowed out of his nursing home in Glasgow to her house in the city for Christmas and, while he was being bathed, had asked his brother to kill him.

On Boxing Day, Brady, of



Brady: he acted out of compassion for brother

Skelmanthorpe, west Yorkshire, had given his brother some alcohol and an overdose of his medicine. When he returned to the room and heard him breathing, he had put a pillow on his face.

Lord Macfadyen said he was satisfied that Brady had acted out of compassion rather than malice. "You brought your brother's life to an end at his own earnest and prolonged heartfelt request," he said. By the time of his death, James Brady had been reduced by a "dreadful disease" to a state of debility.

The judge went on to express hesitation about the message a lenient sentence might give, saying his duty was not only to have regard to

the circumstances of the crime but to public interest. "Whatever the motivation may have been and however mitigating the circumstances, the deliberate taking of a life of another remains a serious crime."

He said he had considered whether a custodial sentence was necessary to "make it plain" to others that taking the life of another person, even in the circumstances of this case, was unlawful. "With some considerable hesitation, I have come to the conclusion that the culpability of your conduct is sufficiently marked by the fact you have been convicted on your own confession of a serious crime of culpable homicide," the judge said. He admonished Brady.

As he left the court, Brady was hugged by his tearful family, who had supported his actions and appeared on television to argue his case. He said: "I am too emotional to speak. I am just relieved for myself and the whole family."

Gallery says funding system threatens loss of contemporary works

Arts bodies refuse grants to buy new Freud

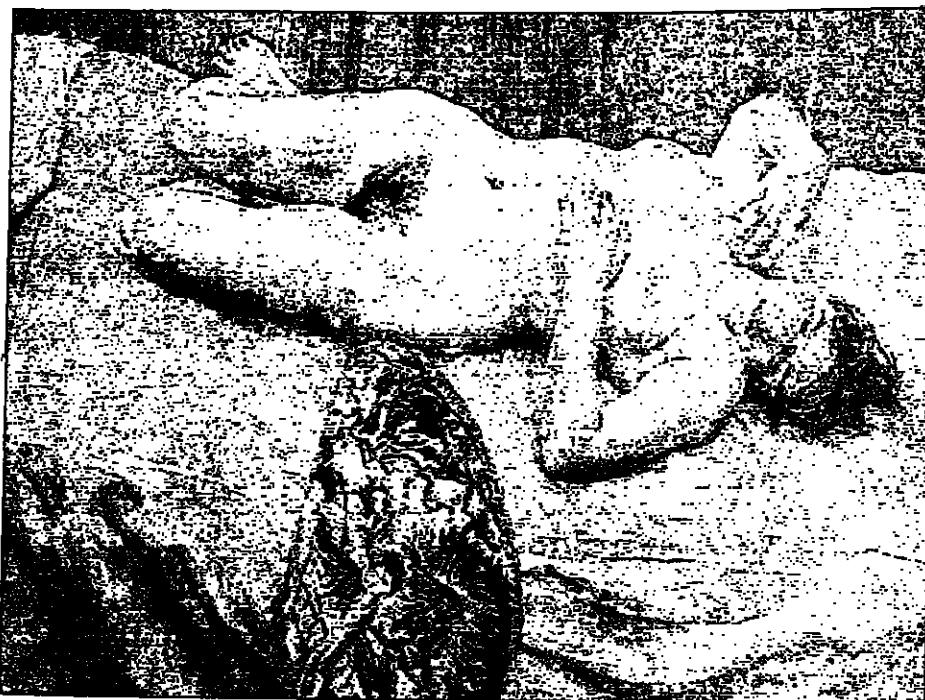
By DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

A PORTRAIT of a nude girl was last night claimed to have exposed a major flaw in arts funding, leaving public galleries with little chance to buy contemporary masterpieces for Britain.

The Heritage Lottery Fund has turned down an application for help in buying Lucian Freud's new work, *Portrait on Grey Cover*, because it is less than 20 years old. The Arts Council rejected the appeal because the painting was not commissioned. Each funding body recommended the other.

Yesterday Edward King, director of the Abbot Hall Art Gallery and Museum in Kendal, Cumbria, which made the application, said: "We have been going backwards and forwards between the two for the last six weeks. Each says it is the responsibility of the other."

The gallery attracted 26,000 people to its Lucian Freud exhibition this summer. Mr King described the £780,000 nude, finished in



Lucian Freud's new *Portrait on Grey Cover*: no lottery cash for 20 years

August this year, as "a wonderful work — it is one of the most beautiful and tender of all his paintings".

The director said that without lottery support, it would

be almost impossible for any public gallery in Britain to buy such paintings.

Portrait on Grey Cover measures 55 in by 68 in. It is currently in America for an

exhibition at the Acquavella, the gallery of Lucien Freud's dealer in New York. The dealer is donating £150,000 to the museum's appeal, and has also extended the six-

week reserve on it by a fortnight, despite having a queue of collectors clamouring to buy it.

The National Art Collections Fund, Britain's largest art charity, has once again reacted with speed to a museum's appeal: it offered a £75,000 grant towards the purchase price.

David Barrie, the charity's director, said: "It would be absurd if Abbot Hall were denied the opportunity to purchase this outstanding new work by Freud because of a bureaucratic anomaly in the Lottery-funding system. Let's hope that the funding bodies can work out a solution as time is running out fast. This case raises an extremely important issue: can masterpieces created in the last 20 years be acquired for permanent collections with lottery help? If not, the system needs to be changed."

Spokeswomen from both the Arts Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund each said their hands were tied by the rules governing the grants that they can make.

Visual arts, page 37

Wallace will not face a retrial

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

THE former army information officer Colin Wallace, whose conviction for manslaughter was quashed last week, was told yesterday that he would not face a retrial.

Lord Bingham of Cornhill, the Lord Chief Justice, said in the Court of Appeal that the interests of justice would not be served if Mr Wallace, who served six years of a ten-year sentence, was put before a jury again. The court ruled last week that his conviction for the manslaughter of Jonathan Lewis, an antiques dealer, in 1980 was unsafe.

Lawyers for Mr Wallace, who claims to have been an SAS officer, said after the hearing that they would pursue the question of compensation for the years their client spent in prison. Mr Wallace, 55, claimed that he was the victim of an MIS dirty-tricks campaign to stop him making allegations about covert security service operations in Northern Ireland.

The Crown Prosecution Service had pressed for a retrial, saying the question of who killed Mr Lewis remained unresolved and a rehearing would give Mr Wallace what he had recently demanded — a full inquiry into the case.

Weather is star of new BBC show

By CAROL MIDGLEY

THE BBC began a series yesterday devoted to the nation's favourite topic of conversation: the thrice-weekly *Weather Show* is hosted by Bill Giles and Suzanne Charlton.

Experts will analyse phenomena such as thunderstorms, hurricanes and heatwaves. There will also be features on the lighter side of weather reporting.

Yesterday the lunchtime show, which lasts ten minutes, announced it would be following Sir Ranulph Fiennes on his Antarctic expedition. If the show is well received, it might become a daily fixture and be lengthened to half an hour.

Last month the corporation opened its new weather centre, enabling more accurate and faster forecasts to be put out. *The Weather Show* will provide competition for BSkyB's Weather Channel, which began this month.

Bill Giles said that *The Weather Show* would be topical. "If there is an important weather story developing anywhere in the world we will cover it."

Forecast, page 26
TV listings, page 51

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Doctors accuse immigration officials of discrimination as retirement plans collapse

Australia bars diabetic as burden on the state

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

A BRITISH citizen has been refused permission to emigrate with his family to Australia because he might impose too heavy a burden on the country's health system. Richard Nitze, 49, a chartered engineer who is married to an Australian, is a diabetic in general good health. He is comfortably well off. The Australian High Commission in London has refused to let him emigrate because it says that his condition could deteriorate. This is despite the fact that he has a pension and can afford private schooling for his daughter and private medical insurance. An Australian private medical company had agreed to take over his Bupa cover.

According to the commission, the Australian Government says that if he suffered kidney failure, requiring dialysis or a transplant, it could cost the health system \$Aus400,000 (£200,000) and could mean a native Australian being denied treatment.

The British Diabetic Association said that the decision amounted to discrimination and was medically and ethically wrong. Dr Ken Paterson, chairman of the association's professional advisory committee and consultant diabetes physician at the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, said: "This is a problem we have met before and we have written to Australia House about it."

"It cannot be right to exclude someone who is in perfectly good health because they might develop a health problem in the future. Does that mean they exclude all smokers?"

"The BDA would campaign for a diabetic who was excluded from a job or an activity because of their condition. Then a whole country excludes them. One has to wonder whether in the 1990s that is appropriate."

Mr Nitze, of Wickham Market, Suffolk, who works for Eastern Electricity and is a newly appointed magistrate, planned to take early retirement and move to Australia in the new year so that his wife, Bronwyn, could care for her elderly parents who live there. His daughter, Stefanie, 16, already has Australian citizenship.

"My wife is distraught," Mr Nitze said. "She wanted to be near her parents. I had already paid a deposit on a private school for my daughter. Now the whole thing is a dead duck. I have been told I could appeal but it could take months or years."

Mr Nitze has non-insulin-dependent diabetes, which does not require injections but is controlled by diet. His consultant had described him as "extremely well controlled", he said.

When the Australian authorities received his consultant's report they sent it to a doctor in Australia who said that Mr Nitze's condition could lead to problems in the future.

"My consultant said that the Australian authorities had done lots of extrapolations that are basically meaningless. If the same criteria were used for all diabetics, 95 per cent would be rejected," Mr Nitze said.

Malcolm Paterson, the chief migration officer at the Australian High Commission, said that there was no general principle that diabetics should be rejected but in individual cases their likely impact on the health system had to be considered.

"In Mr Nitze's case, it came down to a difference of medical opinion," he said. "The Australian doctor predicted a poorer outcome. As an employee of the Australian Government, I have to give greater weight to what the Australian doctor says."



Richard Nitze with his wife Bronwyn, who wants to care for her elderly parents, and their 16-year-old daughter Stefanie. Mother and daughter are Australians

NEWS IN BRIEF

Crash kills death car driver on way to trial

A French driver, due to stand trial at Dornoch, Highland, yesterday for causing the death of another motorist in November by driving on the right-hand side of the road, was himself killed in a crash on his way to the court. Rene de Bere, 46, died in the front passenger seat when his car collided with another car, killing the driver, Colin Strang, 21, of Perth. In the car with M de Bere were his French lawyer and a defence witness, both of whom were injured.

Babies buried

Mandy Allwood's eight still-born babies, each in a tiny coffin, were buried at the cemetery in West Norwood, south London, after a funeral service attended by Ms Allwood, 32, her partner Paul Hudson, 37, and a handful of friends and relatives.

Safer beach

Lynette Thornton, whose children Tom and Jodi drowned in August at Holme next the Sea, Norfolk, welcomed moves to improve safety at the beach. Emergency telephones and tide warning signs are to be put up by the parish council.

Coach ban

A coach driver who took children on a trip to the seaside while almost twice over the drink limit was banned from driving for three years by magistrates at Preston. Colin Murphy, 28, from Liverpool, who was stopped on the M6, was fined £750.

Dial-a-detective

Durham police are to investigate some minor crimes by telephone after a successful four-month pioneering experiment in Darlington. The scheme is seen as a time-saving measure that will free officers to concentrate on more serious crimes.

Gym judge jailed

An international gymnastics judge who stole £34,000 from the East Midlands Gymnastics Association while serving as its treasurer was jailed for 18 months. Howard Gibbs, 51, of Stamford, admitted three sample charges of theft at Lincoln Crown Court.

Austen popular

Record numbers of tourists are visiting the home of Jane Austen after the success of film and television adaptations of *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*. The house in Chawton, Hampshire, has attracted more than 50,000 visitors so far this year.

Mastermind title goes to vicar

MASTERMIND has been won by a vicar for the first time in its 24-year history. The Rev Dr Richard Sturch, 60, took the title yesterday with a specialist subject of the operas of Gilbert and Sullivan and a total score of 32 points.

Dr Sturch, from Islip in Oxfordshire, said he had entered because "I wanted to show that the clergy really are quite bright after all".

Dr Sturch, from Islip in Oxfordshire, beat Richard Heller from London and Gwen Kingsley from Kingswinford, West Midlands, who drew with 30 points each, and Elsie Sadek, from Blackpool, with 27.



Rev Sturch: 32 points

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Central storage of weapons 'would present criminals with remote Santa's grottoes to raid at will'

Home Office balks at turning gun clubs into arsenals

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT, AND BILL FROST

THEFTS of firearms could increase if handgun owners are forced to keep their weapons at gun clubs rather than in their homes, according to evidence given to the Dunblane inquiry by the Home Office. The clubs, meanwhile, fear such a move would turn them into targets for terrorists and a former police superintendent said it would be "astonishingly stupid".

Home Office officials submitted 35 potential changes to gun laws to Lord Cullen's inquiry into the school massacre. Apart from the central storage requirement, they included banning the possession and use of all guns, banning ownership of more than one handgun and banning handguns above .22 calibre. Other options included giving police wider discretion to refuse fire-

arms certificates; increasing the number of counter-signatories for certificates and requiring all applications to be countersigned by a doctor.

The doubts about central storage of firearms and ammunition could cause serious difficulties in Parliament if ministers push ahead with a ban on the possession of handguns in private homes. The Home Office warned that concentrating all legally owned guns and ammunition in a limited number of locations would have serious security implications.

Its submission said: "Shooting clubs are often in relatively remote locations. They could well become more attractive targets for theft if it became known that members had to store their guns and ammunition there. Clubs might then

be required to upgrade their security measures, at expense, but the net result could still be an increase in thefts of firearms."

The gun clubs fear that, despite these misgivings, the Government will require them to provide safe storage for handguns. They claimed the move would turn clubs into a "Santa's grotto" for criminals and terrorists in search of arms and ammunition. Security precautions required to give teeth to any proposed legislation would drive many clubs out of business and could never prove foolproof.

Andrew Barnard, one of the few gun club owners already offering members secure storage for weapons, said he could make a fortune should the proposal ever become law. However, he warned that the



Handguns stored at the Wiltshire Shooting Centre. Former members include Michael Ryan, responsible for the Hungerford massacre

move would "do nothing to avert another Dunblane".

Mr Barnard should know. Among former members at his Wiltshire Shooting Centre in Devizes was Michael Ryan, the Hungerford gun "enthusiast" who killed 16 people and wounded 14 others nine years ago. "To make gun clubs into arsenals would be an act of folly," Mr Barnard said last

night. "No matter what security measures you call for, unless there is a great deal of money spent, it is only a question of time before you are turned over."

There are estimated to be about 200,500 legally held handguns in the United Kingdom, of which around 190,000 are revolvers or automatic pistols, the remainder being

single-shot pistols used for target shooting. Many of Britain's 2,118 approved gun clubs — 247 are in Scotland — are in remote locations.

Ian McConchie, general secretary of the National Pistol Association, agreed that clubs in isolated areas "stand no chance" against determined thieves. "Even the best protected clubs get raided. It doesn't

matter what precautions you go for. We have had two recent examples where raiders bulldozed down wire fences and brick walls."

Colin Greenwood, editor of *Guns Review*, was a superintendent with West Yorkshire Police in charge of firearms training. He refused to believe that any government could be "so mad" as to introduce a law

compelling shooters to give their weapons over to gun clubs for safe keeping. "You are just creating safe and easy targets for terrorists and other violent criminals."

"It would be astonishingly stupid to introduce such a change and it would fly in the face of all the advice offered by senior police officers and the Home Office."

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Forsyth 'would fend off poll challenge'

By SHIRLEY ENGLISH

MICHAEL FORSYTH yesterday dismissed the threat from campaigners for gun control to put up a candidate against him in the approaching general election.

The Scottish Secretary's Stirling constituency, which includes Dunblane, has the second smallest Conservative majority in Scotland. Mr Forsyth said he would not be pushed into arguing for a ban on handguns. "It is my job to discuss things with colleagues and then put them to Parliament. I am not going to be pressurised." Supporters of Mr Forsyth in his constituency expressed confidence that they could fend off any challenge from the Snowdrop Petition, which this weekend threatened to put up Ann Pearson against him if the Government failed to legislate for a complete handgun ban.

At the same time, a group of Dunblane parents who lost children in the massacre called on Mr Forsyth to back an all-out ban or resign because he could not claim to be representing his constituents. Yesterday Ritchie Robertson, chairman of the local Conservatives, said the parents' stance was "grossly unfair" and that Mr Forsyth was right not to pre-empt the Cullen report on the matter, which will be published tomorrow. "Michael Forsyth is an extremely devoted, hard worker

in this constituency and people are starting to make judgments before he has had time to read the Cullen report," Mr Robertson said.

The petition was originally set up by Scottish parents who felt compelled to "do something" after the Dunblane massacre. Initially their aims and tactics were simple. They collected 700,000 signatures and presented them to Parliament in the hope popular pressure would force change.

But the campaign, named after the only flower in bloom on March 13, the date of the Dunblane massacre, has developed into a powerful mouthpiece for parents of Thomas Hamilton's victims and for anti-gun sympathisers across the country.

Mrs Pearson, 40, the mother of three who has emerged as the campaign's figurehead, has, simply by asking whether protecting children or protecting people's right to shoot is more important, made politicians take notice. She addressed the Labour conference this month and reduced many delegates to tears.

Mrs Pearson, who used to live in Dunblane, said yesterday that standing for election would be just one option in a continuing campaign. She admitted that her preference would be to persuade the Labour Party to commit itself to banning handguns.



Ann Pearson, the gun control campaigner, has said she might stand for election against Michael Forsyth

Both parties face election threat

By PETER RIDDELL

THE Scottish Secretary should be concerned by the threat of campaigners for gun control to put up a candidate against him in Stirling if the Government fails to introduce a total ban on handguns.

Michael Forsyth is vulnerable not just because of his small majority of 703 over Labour (or a notional 236 after taking account of boundary changes) but also because the strong local feelings aroused by the Dunblane massacre are about the only circumstances when a single-issue candidate might attract many votes. However, Labour as well as the Tories could be affected.

Most single-issue candidates have not done well in general elections, when the attention is on the main parties. The most striking parallel is Nelson and Colne in 1966, where Sydney Silverman, the sitting Labour MP, faced strong opposition after he had successfully sponsored the Private Member's Bill that led to the abolition of capital punishment in 1965. An independent

standing as an anti-abortionist probably took nearly as many votes from the Tory candidate as from Mr Silverman, whose majority increased nearly in line with the national trend.

If an anti-guns candidate stood in Stirling, he or she could draw votes from both Tory and Labour. But Mr Forsyth cannot afford any differential swing against him rather than Labour.

Among other single-issue candidates, the writer Richard Adams won 2,816 votes, 5.5 per cent, fighting the late Humphrey Atkins on an anti-hunting ticket in Spelthorne in the 1983 general election.

Anti-Brussels candidates have stood ever since Britain first applied to join the Common Market in the early 1960s — particularly against Edward Heath, who was in charge of the first negotiations and led Britain into membership. The mid-term successes of anti-Brussels groups have not been repeated in general elections.

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Blair sells Labour as new champion of family values

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN CAPE TOWN

TONY BLAIR spoke yesterday of his hopes of creating a "decent society" based on traditional family values and strong communities. He used a speech in Cape Town to declare that a Labour government would try to unite a prosperous Britain around a new social morality. He said that otherwise it would be difficult to sustain economic progress.

The Labour leader rejected claims that he was promoting neo-Conservative ideas, describing his aims as a "radical centre-left" agenda that his transformed party was well placed to pursue.

"I have no desire to return to the age of Victorian hypocrisy about sex, to women's place being only in the kitchen, to homophobia or to preaching to people about their private lives as the ill-fated back to basics campaign of the Conservatives attempted to do."

"But the absence of prejudice should not mean the absence of rules, of order, of stability. Let us construct them for today. Let the social morality be based on reason — not bigotry. But let us not delude

ourselves that we can build a society fit for our children to grow up in without making a moral judgment about the nature of that society."

He added: "This isn't a kilted philosophy. This is enlightened self-interest. In a society in which opportunity is extended, we have greater security, our streets are safer, our young people more motivated, our ambitions better fulfilled. This is a society that is invigorating, exciting, good to live in."

Mr Blair, addressing the Commonwealth press union, spoke of his belief that encouraging greater parental responsibility would ease the burden on the welfare state caused by social decay. "Most of the children who are bad are made bad, not born bad," he said. "And we, their parents and the society we create, are what make them."

On the need for stronger communities, he said: "The language of getting has replaced the language of giving. Do-gooding has become a term of abuse, as if to help others is somehow a weakness when in truth it is a strength.

We are growing immune to wrong-doing. As a society we have lost our capacity to be outraged when our elderly are treated with disrespect, or our young neglected."

He emphasised the need for parental responsibility, particularly in helping children with their education. He saw no reason for young children to be out on their own late at night. "We are examining measures to tackle this. Some have called it curfew. I call it child protection."

Nothing angered him more than accusations that he was raising an "illiberal agenda" for the nanny state. "It is about understanding that liberty is not just an exercise in a moral vacuum and we do not live just as individuals, but as part of society."

He told *The Times* that his party's ideas about social contracts would be expanded upon months ahead and said it was a mark of how "skewed" the political debate had become that by raising such issues he could be accused of adopting a right-wing agenda. He denied that he was stealing Tory baggage, insisting that

he was re-emphasising traditional Labour values of self-improvement that had been expounded by Keir Hardie and Clement Attlee.

"I think this is something that is so important for people to understand as part of new Labour. It's actually about going back to our roots and representing the concerns of

these people. If you've got the money you can buy yourself out of these social problems, if you don't you're stuck there."

The idea of a new social morality was something traditional Labour supporters were "crying out" for. The Left had long been reluctant to satisfy that demand for fear of being accused of trying to switch

back the clock. "Actually you don't have to say that. You can construct a different social and moral code for today's world that takes account of changes that are good, like the liberation of women."

Referring to John Major's "new Labour, old-school tie" gibe last week about his public school education, Mr Blair

said: "It's not where you come from that's important for the country. It is what you are and what you're going to do for the country. That's what the election should be about. I don't have much time either for snobbery or for inverted snobbery."



Tony Blair saying goodbye to a child he met at the Nazareth House Aids orphanage in Cape Town

Tories deny selling access to minister

BY JAMES LANDALE
POLITICAL REPORTER

LABOUR accused the Tories yesterday of soliciting £500 from businessmen and tourism chiefs in return for granting access to Virginia Bottomley, the National Heritage Secretary.

In what has been called the "cash for crissans" affair, Jack Cunningham, the Shadow National Heritage Secretary, told the Commons that a breakfast meeting held last week broke the Prime Minister's pledge in July that "no one can buy access to ministers" over a breakfast.

Mrs Bottomley rejected the claims, saying that the breakfast was open to anyone who could pay the £7.50 cover charge.

The allegation was based on a letter from Simon Coombs, Tory MP for Swindon, inviting tourism leaders to the breakfast at Bournemouth hotel during the Tory conference. Under the auspices of a group called Tories for Tourism, he asked for businessmen to sponsor the breakfast. "For £500, you would be able to discuss issues of concern to you informally over breakfast with Virginia Bottomley and members of her National Heritage team..."

Mr Cunningham asked Mrs Bottomley if this was "proper or doesn't it just make the statement the Prime Minister made to this House in July absolute rubbish?"

Mrs Bottomley replied: "Anybody who thought the only way to speak to me was to pay £500 would waste a great deal of money. I am available at virtually every major tourism event that takes place and I am only too happy to hear directly from people what their concerns are."

Tory sources said that of the 50 people who attended the event, 49 paid £7.50 and only one paid £500 to sponsor it. The sponsor had no greater access to Mrs Bottomley than did any other guest. The cash receipts, none of which went to the party, merely covered the cost of the breakfast.

Why the Hamilton affair calls for an unfettered inquiry

Tory party managers suffered a serious setback yesterday in their attempt to limit the scope of parliamentary inquiries into the Neil Hamilton affair — and quite right too. The Tories are correct that British public life is not particularly corrupt, or "steamy", by international standards, but that is precisely why there now needs to be the fullest possible investigation. The Tories do themselves no favours by crying foul. They are misreading the public mood, as rightly interpreted yesterday by the Speaker. By the spirit, as much as the substance of her statement, she reinforced demands for a full inquiry.

Yesterday was a time for reality after two weeks of shadow boxing

since the collapse of the libel case against *The Guardian*. Labour and the Liberal Democrats had originally gone off on the wrong track in demanding a formal judicial inquiry. John Major was right to reject this call. Leaving aside the legal objections raised yesterday by Downing Street officials, such a tribunal could easily have taken a year or more.

It would also have been wrong for issues to do with Parliament and the conduct of MPs not to be investigated by the House's streamlined disciplinary machinery. The post-Nolan framework of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards and the Standards and Privileges Committee was set up last year to

deal with the shortcomings of the old disciplinary arrangements. This new system should be given the chance to prove itself, as Labour and the Liberal Democrats now accept.

Worries that Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner, would have insufficient resources and powers were always ill-founded. As the Speaker made clear, "all necessary steps" will be taken to ensure that the commissioner and the committee are "adequately staffed", while if they need additional powers, "no doubt the House will be invited to decide whether they

should be granted". In the current political climate, it would anyway have been impossible to suppress an inquiry and Mr Major has repeatedly said he will make available all relevant papers.

The real issue is the scope of the investigation. Tory party managers had been hoping to limit the inquiry to the original allegations by Mohammed Al Fayed against Mr Hamilton and related matters not considered by the old Members' Interests Committee because of the libel case. But much wider allegations have now been raised over Mr Hamilton's acceptance of payments from Ian Greer. As Donald Dewar and Archie Kirkwood, the Labour and Liberal Democrat Chief Whips,

argued yesterday in a joint statement, these matters should also be dealt with in the traditional way. The Speaker was careful not to say what the committee should examine. Her concern was more that the committee should rapidly inform the House about "the full nature and scope of any investigations which it undertakes".

The Willetts memorandum — the note written by David Willetts, the Paymaster General, when he was a whip two years ago about the members' interests inquiry — is entirely separate and does not come within Sir Gordon's current remit. The report of the Select Committee on Standards in Public Life in July 1995 that set out the powers of the

commissioner made clear that this type of privilege issue should be dealt with in the traditional way. The Speaker acts as an initial filter for complaints which are then referred by the House to the committee. Any suggestion that Sir Gordon should take on such privilege issues would make him even more of a judicial investigator.

It is in everybody's interests — Parliament's, the Tories, even the now beleaguered and tawdry Mr Hamilton — that nothing is suppressed. It is the only way to deal with wider allegations about sleaze and to rebuild confidence in Parliament.

PETER RIDDELL

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

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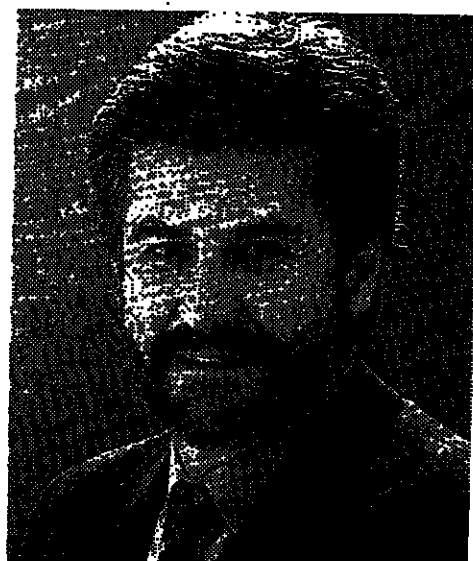
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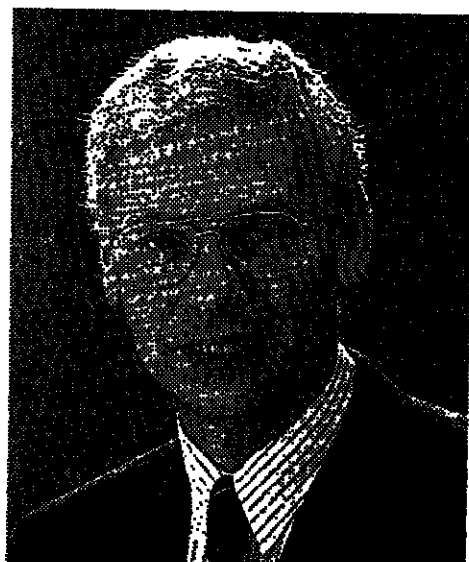
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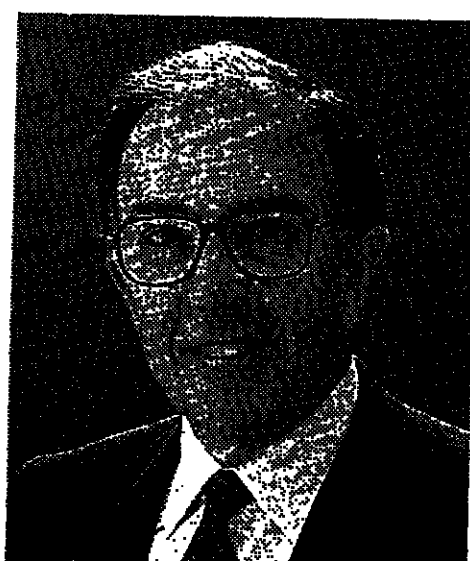
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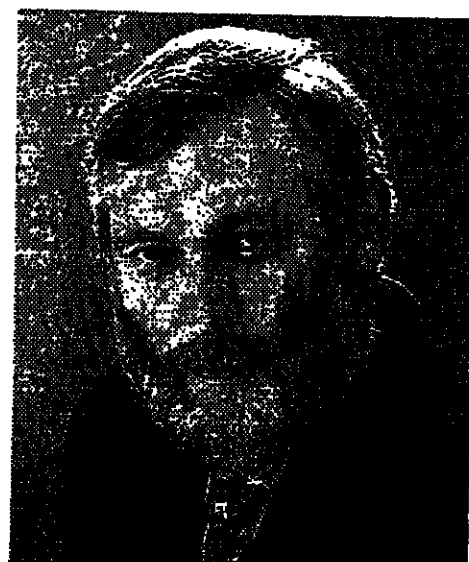
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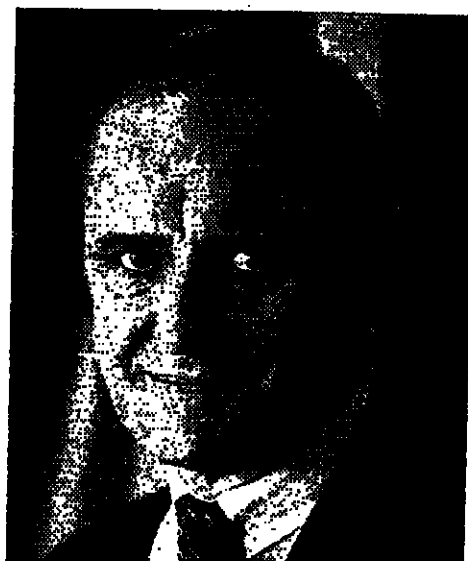
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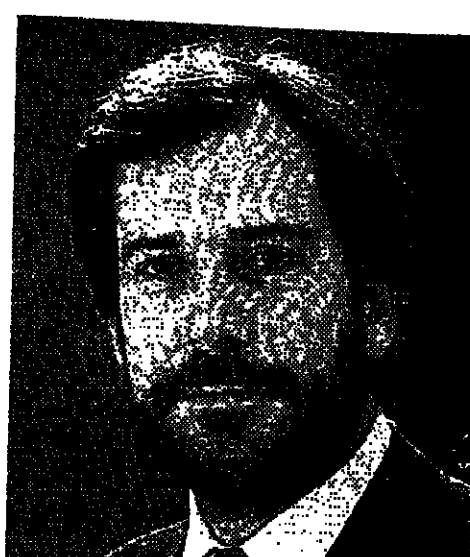
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Daewoo bid could bring jobs to Antrim

By OLIVER AUGUST

DAEWOO, the Korean electronics company, is confident of acquiring part of Thomson, the French group, in a move that could bring up to 10,000 jobs to Northern Ireland.

This week, the French Government will announce the result of the privatisation auction for Thomson Multi Media, manufacturer of branded television sets. Daewoo has said that it will invest £1.7 billion in its European research facilities, including its plant at Antrim, if the bid is successful.

JB Chun, managing director of Daewoo Electronics Europe, insisted that the resumption of terrorist activity in Northern Ireland would not influence the group's decision to transfer more work to Antrim. "We are not worried about that. I have been involved in our operations in Northern Ireland since we began in 1989 and we have never been targeted or blackmailed."

In the auction for TMM, Daewoo is competing against Alcatel, the French consumer electronics group. Mr Chun said that he was confident of beating Alcatel because Daewoo is promising to invest heavily in TMM, while Alcatel's strategy would involve downsizing. Alcatel has also been rumoured to be considering moving TMM's head office to America.

The combined Daewoo-Thomson group would aim to manufacture 15 million television sets annually in Europe.

Mr Chun said: "The cost of labour as a percentage of total cost has gone down to 5 per cent. So it is cheaper to build the televisions here than to build them in Korea and then bring them to Europe."

While the western European electronics market is stable, Daewoo wants to use the manufacturing base in France and Northern Ireland as a springboard for sales in Eastern Europe.



John Goodwin, left, chairman of Highland Distilleries, and Brian Ivory, chief executive, sampling products of the whisky company

Confusion marks start of Gas referral to MMC

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE prices battle between British Gas and the industry regulator began its formal referral to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission yesterday amid confusion over the terms of reference.

Clare Spotswood, Director-General of Gas Supply, appeared to back down over earlier threats that if the company refused her last price proposals for TransCo, the pipelines business, thereby forcing an MMC referral, she would institute a harsher valuation of the business and

possibly widen the inquiry beyond the question of pricing controls.

While sticking with her last valuation of TransCo, a crucial formula for British Gas's revenues, and not explicitly widening the terms of reference, yesterday's referral nevertheless emphasised that the regulator was empowered to broaden the reference. This could be extended to include British Gas's exploration and production arm.

British Gas believes that a possible extension to the refer-

ence would not have been mentioned had it not been in the regulator's mind to do so. A spokesman for Ofgas said that the terms would only be widened if the MMC asked for such a move.

The referral to the MMC has been triggered by British Gas's rejection of pricing proposals for TransCo, which would have cut domestic bills by £28 a year. The company has claimed that the harsher pricing controls mean that it would have to halve its workforce of 20,000.

Ms Spotswood set out her ground in the referral to the MMC by saying the present controls that govern TransCo's revenues were against the public interest. She said that they allowed the company to set higher prices than necessary, provided inappropriate incentives, failed to encourage competition in some areas, and did not allow sufficient monitoring of TransCo's spending.

Philip Rogerson, Deputy Chairman of British Gas, said that the uncertainty over the terms of the reference added to the regulatory uncertainty in the industry.

He said: "We've had 15 to 16 months of discussion over this review and we are not clear about what will be presented to the MMC. This doesn't make for good regulatory practice."

The MMC investigation is expected to take six months.

This week Ofgas is expected to deliver its final pricing proposals for the supply side of British Gas's business, which cover its pricing to domestic customers.

Takeover costs hit Highland

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

THE takeover of Macallan-Glenlivet cut profits of Highland Distilleries by 14 per cent.

Highland made pre-tax profits for the year to August 31 of £37.1 million, down from £42.9 million a year ago. Earnings were hit by a £3 million reorganisation charge, which includes £2.3 million in payments to Macallan directors who have left and to 25 staff made redundant at Macallan's Craigellachie whisky plant, and £200,000 in Macallan bid defence costs.

Interest costs rose by £2.8 million, mainly because of carrying a 26 per cent shareholding in Macallan from January to August 12, when the acquisition, done in conjunction with Suntory of Japan, was completed.

The worse than expected results sent Highland shares down by 3 per cent, to 330p.

UK sales of The Famous Grouse, Highland's main brand, fell by 3 per cent as the domestic whisky market shrank by 4 per cent. The brand's market share rose from 13 to 13.3 per cent.

Earnings per share fell to 20.1p from 21.9p. The final dividend rises to 6.3p (6p), making 8.3p (7.9p).

Ex-director sues for £1.28m

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

A FORMER director of Littlewoods is claiming £1.28 million from the company's pensions trust for unpaid pension benefits.

Prodip Guha, who was fired two years ago for alleged gross misconduct, is already suing Littlewoods for wrongful dismissal. Littlewoods has

launched a counter claim. The dismissal of Mr Guha, who was an international director and deputy chief executive, helped to bring to light a power struggle within the company between family members and management.

The struggle escalated as the National Lottery took foot-

ball pools' business and culminated last year in a failed £1.1 million takeover bid by N Brown, the catalogue company, and Iceland, the frozen food retailer.

The company declined to comment on Mr Guha's action against the Littlewoods Pensions Trust.

Oil spill payouts could total £20m

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

CLAIMS for damage to the fishing and tourism industries after the hosing of the Sea Empress oil tanker off Milford Haven are likely to total £20 million, it emerged yesterday. Loss adjusters acting for fishermen and workers in shellfish processing said the oil spill had been "disastrous" for the industry. Hoteliers, owners and caravan sites would be making smaller claims because the summer season had been better than expected, said a spokesman for MPC, one of the leading loss adjusters.

Hoteliers affected by the pollution disaster at the beginning of the year met oil industry officials yesterday to

discuss compensation for their summer losses. They claim figures from the Wales tourist board show demand for hotel and guest house accommodation was 5 per cent down in August, the fifth successive month of decline. Some businesses have reportedly suffered a 20 per cent downturn.

But MPC said a higher number of day-trippers and families on weekend breaks meant that the summer had not been as bad as first anticipated. Claims may be reduced by up to 10 per cent if the body responsible for compensation, the International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund, decides that poor weather kept away tourists.

WDA plans to lift exports

By IOLA SMITH

THE Welsh Development Agency has appointed Tom Myerscough, chairman of Courtaulds Japan, to help to boost exports of Welsh automotive components to Japan.

Automotive components is the largest manufacturing sector in Wales. The sector's 150 companies employ 20,000 people and generate £1.8 bil-

lion of sales a year. The agency believes that a further £6.25 million could be generated annually by sales to Japan.

Dr Myerscough has already led initiatives to export British automotive components and textiles to Japan under the Department of Trade and Industry's Action Japan export drive.

Sixty names seek talks over demands

Lloyd's to issue more writs

By JON ASHWORTH

LLOYD'S of London is preparing to issue a second batch of writs in its efforts to recover £500 million in outstanding debts.

Names in Canada are likely to feature in the latest demands for payment, expected within the next ten days.

Tony Gooda, the former Lloyd's underwriter, and Robin Kingsley, chairman of the Lime Street Agency, are among Lloyd's personalities to feature in the first batch of 240 writs, issued last week. They are being pursued for £1.67 million and £1.26 million

respectively. Names have reacted angrily to the demands, questioning the validity of the figures.

At least 60 names have approached Lloyd's requesting talks. Rupert Galliers-Pratt, who featured in the initial tranche of writs, said he was willing to pay once the amount involved had been established. Mr Galliers-Pratt, an Old Etonian, said: "I've had three different estimates of amounts owing to me. Tell me which one it is, and I'll send them a cheque." The writ cites a figure of £50,000.

Sally Noel, who faces a demand for nearly £300,000, said she would continue to resist calls for payment. She said: "They are pulling them [the figures] out of the sky. No other business would be allowed to get away with it." Mrs Noel claims she was fraudulently recruited on to two high-risk Lloyd's syndicates. She publicly cut up her 34-page writ at the weekend.

The first action against names in America is expected in early November. Lloyd's hopes to have the first test cases in court by Christmas.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

ADM agrees \$100m fines for price fixing

ARCHER DANIELS MIDLAND, the American agricultural products company, has agreed to plead guilty to federal charges related to price fixing and to pay \$100 million in fines. ADM said that the agreement, which is subject to court approval, settles the US Justice Department's investigation of price fixing of feed additive lysine and citric acid, and closes a third inquiry, related to high-fructose corn syrup.

ADM said that it will pay a fine of \$70 million relating to lysine, an additive for animal feed, and \$30 million in connection with citric acid, used in various foods and drinks. ADM said the agreement is a global resolution of all matters between Justice Department and ADM. It is not known whether the Justice Department plans to charge executives.

Water stake 'not for sale'

WASTE MANAGEMENT International, whose US parent owns 30 per cent of Wessex Water, yesterday stood by the holding amid reports that disposals may be imminent. The company, which reported a 7.9 per cent increase in third-quarter pre-tax profits to £42.8 million, said the position was unchanged from a statement in the summer that the stake was not about to be sold. Speculation has surrounded the WMX Technologies holding since WMX appointed a chief executive, Philip Rooney, who indicated that non-core operations could be sold. Wessex is bidding for South West Water.

Rocky road for Fiat

SHARES of Fiat, the Italian car manufacturer, yesterday fell to their lowest price for almost three years amid a lack of consumer confidence in its domestic market and worries about the impact on exports from the high value of the lira. The shares fell below the 4,000 lire (about £1.50) level to close down 1.49 per cent at 3,964 lire, their lowest since December 1993. Italy's car market has struggled to recover from recession and sales look set to fall below the levels of 1993. Consumer confidence has been further unsettled by worries over a new Eurotax, part of Italy's tough 1997 financial budget package.

French telecoms plan

GENERALE DES EAUX, the French diversified utility, hopes British Telecom will join it and Mannesmann, of Germany, to run the telecommunications operations of SNCF, the state-owned railway company. Generale des Eaux made a formal bid for the operations yesterday with its German partner, Bouygues, the construction to media group, has tabled a rival offer in partnership with Stet, of Italy. France plans to deregulate the telecommunications regime in 1998, breaking the domestic monopoly of state-owned France Telecom to comply with European Union rules.

Racal in MoD talks

THE Ministry of Defence has entered into contract negotiations with Racal Radar Defence Systems as prime contractor for the radar and mission system upgrade of the Royal Navy's Sea King helicopter, for early warning application. This closely follows the choice of Racal's Searchwater 2000 maritime reconnaissance radar for the Royal Air Force's replacement for its Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft. Recent selections are expected to result in orders worth more than £150 million to Racal once contract negotiations have been completed.

Gas pipeline go-ahead

CONSTRUCTION began yesterday on the Interconnector gas pipeline that will link Britain with continental Europe. The £460 million project will carry up to 20 billion cubic metres of natural gas a year from the terminal at Bacton, Norfolk, to Zeebrugge. About 8.5 billion cubic metres a year will flow in the opposite direction. Partners in the Interconnector consortium are British Gas, BP, National Power, Elf Aquitaine of France, Russia's Gazprom, Distrigas of Belgium, Ruhrgas of Germany and Amerasia Hess of America.

Chrysler sets record

CHRYSLER Corp, the American automotive company, reported a 92 per cent rise in profits for the third quarter as a surge in sales of cars, trucks and minivans boosted results to record levels. The company earned \$680 million, compared with profits of \$354 million. Revenues climbed to \$14.4 billion, a third-quarter record and an increase of \$2.4 billion, or 20 per cent, over the same period last year. Chrysler repurchased \$452 million of its common stock in the quarter. The company initiated a \$2 billion common stock buyback for 1996, and expects to repurchase an additional \$1 billion in 1997.

Spanish sell-off

THE Spanish Government proposes to relinquish its outstanding holdings in Telefonica, the telecommunications company, and Argentina, the financial services company, next year, Josep Pique, the Industry Minister, said yesterday. The Spanish State has about a 25 per cent stake in Argentina and about 21 per cent of Telefonica. Señor Pique said the Government also plans to sell its remaining 10 per cent stake in Repsol, the oil company, next spring. The state is also considering the sale of part of its near-67 per cent holding in Empresa Nacional de Electricidad.

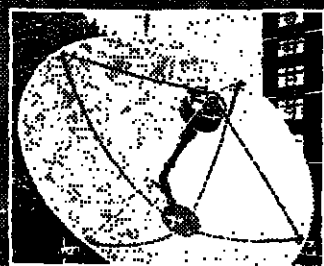
Tax plea to Chancellor

TAX RELIEF on Tessa schemes should be diverted to subsidise long-term care plans by making contributions tax deductible, the Association of Consulting Actuaries advises the Chancellor. It also wants greater flexibility for personal pensions and additional voluntary contributions to be diverted to financing care. Taxation on pensions needs to be simplified if more employers are not to opt out of final salary schemes, the association argues in its pre-Budget submission. It wants to restore the 1993 cut in the dividend tax that could be reclaimed from the Inland Revenue by pension funds.

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TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.09	1.93
Austria Sch	17.99	16.49
Belgium Fr	52.76	48.46
Canada \$	2.241	2.081
Cyprus Cyp£	0.768	0.714
Denmark Kr	9.83	9.03
Finland Mk	7.78	7.14
France Fr	8.57	7.92
Germany DM	2.57	2.36
Greece Dr	364	339
Hong Kong \$	12.85	11.85
Iceland Pk	115	95
Ireland Pk	5.43	5.05
Israel Sh	5.45	4.77
Italy Lira	2610	2355
Japan Yen	193.40	174.40
Malta	0.811	0.759
Netherlands Gld	2.882	2.632
New Zealand \$	10.81	9.99
Norway Kr	2.41	2.21
Portugal Esc	265.50	237.00
S. Africa Rd	5.76	5.35
Spain Ptas	206.50	186.50
Sweden Kr	11.04	10.24
Switzerland Fr	2.11	1.93
Turkey Lira	165000	145000
USA \$	1.678	1.548

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading on Friday.

هكذا من الأصل

Worries over whisky sales Purge in wake of Peter Young affair Labour's election odds fall

Grain of hope in overseas markets

PREMIUM Scotch whisky is at first glance one of those curious markets — children's safety equipment is one of the few others to spring to mind — where high prices may attract the consumer rather than deter a purchase. This is one reason the industry has avoided the sort of cost-conscious rationalisation that has befallen other industries and managed to remain true to its antique tartan image.

One of the best incursions from the real world was the cold-blooded swoop on Macallan Glenlivet by Highland Distillers in July and its inevitable chaser, the sacking of almost half the former's Speyside workforce. What was interesting was the timing of Highland's move. The whisky industry had endured three winters of price wars. Christmas 1994 having been particularly awful.

While the best whiskies have always maintained their distance from the common herd, the cuts among cheaper brands had an unexpected effect. The entire pack shuffled back in price; aristocratic single malts used to commanding £20 or more suffered the indignity of being chopped out by the big super-markets at 30 quid for two.

By last summer the worst of the damage was over, some single-digit price rises had been hammered through, and the

industry had decided to go into this pre-Christmas selling season with a united front. Yesterday's figures from Highland Distillers suggest this may not be easy. The industry has seen a 4 per cent fall in sales in Britain over the past year, suggesting the gradual decline in whisky drinking over the past couple of decades is accelerating. It may be that the earlier price cuts slowed the natural decline, and volume is now being sacrificed in return for higher prices. But it would not take much for one producer to break ranks and start the downward spiral again — to the customer's benefit and the industry's ruin.

Highland has a poor record for diversifying: it is not too many years since a dalt venture into mushroom farming and a particularly hideous scotch-and-orange concoction for the youth market. The company is now producing its own gin, as yet an unproven quantity, and a special Famous Grouse brand for the Far East. It now exports one bottle of Famous Grouse, its main seller, for each one that stays in this country. The in-

dustry's salvation is going to be in markets such as India, China and South America, where whisky is often drunk, horror or horrors, with Coke or another mixer. Consumers seem strangely unconcerned whether the label features a sprig of heather or a tam-o'-shanter, either. They may be young, a market Highland and its rivals find it hard to attract on their home turf.

Some of the international drinks groups have already latched on to this and directed their advertising accordingly. The smaller producers will ultimately have to do the same.

Don't spare the axe at MGAM

FOR a while it seemed we were heading for yet another messy City cover-up. The pattern is familiar: hundreds of millions go missing from the vaults of Megabank, and after weeks of trawling through the details, a far-reaching purge is announced. The man in charge of ordering paperclips is fired, the



tea-lady demoted. The head of the department settles back to sleep again.

Either today or tomorrow, the purge of senior executives at Morgan Grenfell Asset Management in the wake of the Peter Young affair will be announced. Mr Young was a star among fund managers, not usually, admittedly, a charismatic breed, for his ability to pick winners. As it turned out, some of the valuations he put on his successes were dubious, and his investment strategy ran counter to both MGAM house rules and common sense.

Now Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, owner of the fund manager, must decide how far up the managerial chain the axe should

go. Already identified are the compliance director — fair enough, as the internal policeman he must attract some blame — and two of Mr Young's immediate bosses. As yet unconfirmed is the departure of Keith Percy, the chief executive and therefore the man at the top of the food chain at MGAM.

Mr Percy is an amiable and popular man, but his name must be on that list. He might go of his own accord, rather than work under his replacement, it is suggested. But to omit him would make a mockery of this summer's Securities and Futures Authority guidelines, put out after Barings and the survival of the two men at the top, Peter Baring and Andrew Tuckey, with their respective fortunes intact. These say a senior executive's ignorance of wrong-doing by subordinates is not enough to absolve him or her from blame. The same line was adopted by Imro, Morgan Grenfell's regulator, in the case of Jardine Fleming in Hong Kong.

Ahead of a decision on what to do with Mr Young himself, such an outcome, with resignations

going right to the top and no handsome pay-offs or "consultancy" deals either, would seem to confirm this doctrine.

City dusts off the Tories

HOPE is at hand for Conservative Central Office. Each month, Merrill Lynch asks fund managers responsible for more than £1,000 billion which party they think will have the most seats in the next Parliament. Each month so far this year somewhere between 92 and 99 per cent have given their unsentimental vote to Labour. At the beginning, Merrill confesses, only one person in their sample reckoned the Tories would still hang on after the election.

All this has suddenly changed. A poll of 76 of these financial eminences grise taken after Labour's conference and during that of the Tories found eight fund managers backing another Tory plurality, Labour's odds-on dominance is down to 59 per cent. But does this matter any more? In 1992, something like an

evens chance of a Labour victory produced sweaty palpitations on City exchanges. In part, Labour is now favourite because it has few non-Tory financial policies.

Only utility stocks, pariahs ahead of Labour's posturing on "windfall" tax, have on the whole become less unpopular among the Neros of the investment world than over the spring and summer. They are still far from being flavour of the month.

Being within infection range of the Bank of England, fund managers are more worried about inflation. They think short-term interest rates will have to go up, albeit modestly, after the election. Like a new boss charging anything possible to last year's accounts, new Labour is more likely to raise rates instantly and blame the Tories. New Labour, new orthodoxy.

Smokers welcome

A PRO-SMOKING action group has provided a travel guide that includes a list of tobacco-friendly health clubs — and a restaurant where you are encouraged to light up, which doesn't say much for the cooking. Next off the presses is the William Hill nap of three-legged horses, Douglas Hogg on care-free beef farming — and Peter Young's selection of the world's finest unlisted securities.

Sluggish markets hold back Premier

By PAUL DURMAN

PREMIER Farnell, the electronic components distributor formed from a £1.85 billion takeover, is still being held back by sluggish markets and can see no sign of any short-term revival.

The company, now burdened with £410 million of debt, had slower growth in sales this year. Although the demand for computer chips remains strong, prices in the group's volume distribution business have fallen because of overcapacity.

These problems and £7.7 million of reorganisation costs restricted Premier Farnell to first-half pre-tax profits of £56.1 million. The original

Farnell business increased its operating profits from £32.9 million to £36 million on sales nearly 10 per cent higher at £277.3 million. The US-based Premier Industrial was included only from its acquisition in April, but made an opening contribution to operating profits of £33.9 million.

Farnell's US business has been moved to Chicago, the home of Premier's Newark Electronics, while Newark's European arm has relocated to Leeds. These changes and the elimination of head office duplication have cost about 150 jobs.

Copies of Farnell's catalogue of products have been sent out to Newark's customers and have prompted a promising level of new orders. Newark's catalogue is being sent to Farnell's customers for the first time this week.

The main impact from the market pressures was felt at Farnell Electronic Services, the volume component distributor. Management in Germany and Italy, where the group made lower profits, has been changed. Farnell increased sales and profits in the UK in spite of lower gross margins.

Farnell Components, the catalogue arm, continued to improve sales and profits although at a slower rate. Catalogue sales represent just over half the group's annual sales of almost £1.1 billion. CPC, which distributes spares and accessories for consumer electronic goods, produced "excellent" results, beating its profit targets.

After adjusting for rationalisation costs and other one-off items, reported earnings fell 6 per cent to 16p a share.

The company is increasing its interim dividend 19 per cent to 5.2p a share. It will be paid on December 2.

The company has paid off £50 million of borrowings, and retained a healthy level of interest cover.

Tempus, page 30

Prism on the track of £12m

PRISM RAIL, the consortium formed to bid for the newly privatised rail franchises, launched a £12.4 million rights issue yesterday as it began operating two new routes (Christine Buckley writes).

Prism, which already operates LTS Rail, now runs SW&W Railway, covering the western, southern and London Midland regions of British Rail. Its rights issue — at 240p on an 11 for 26 basis — was mounted to fund capital requirements for the franchises.

Prism, the only quoted company to specialise in rail transport, is on the shortlist to bid for four more regional franchises — CrossCountry Trains; Merseyrail Electric; Anglia Railway Train Services and West Anglia Great Northern Railway. Prism indicated a profit projection for the year to March of £8 million.

Jardinerie seeks growth in float

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

JARDINERIE Interiors Group, which hires, sells and maintains indoor plants for businesses, hopes to raise up to £4.3 million when it joins the Alternative Investment Market at the end of this month.

Most of money will be used to buy Tropical Plants Display and Office Landscaping. The acquisitions will more than double the group's turnover and will make it the second-largest player in the UK market, behind Rentokill.

William Braid, chief executive, said that the acquisitions are agreed and are dependant only on the listing. The two businesses will cost a little less than £4 million. The money

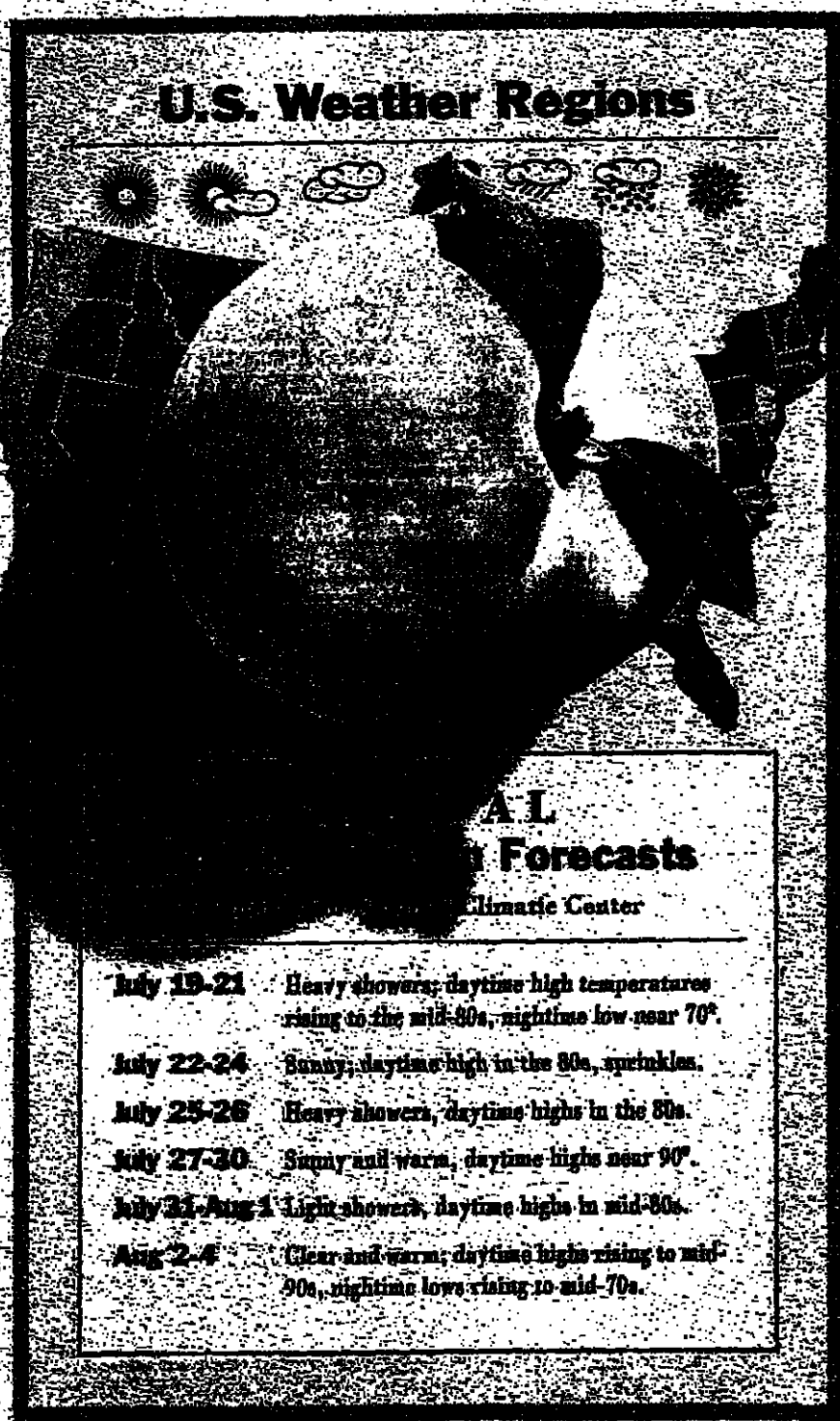
raised from the flotation will also be used to redeem around £300,000 worth of preference shares held by 31, the venture capital group.

The shares will be issued at 114p and the market capitalisation will be £10.2 million. The group — including the two acquisitions yet to be completed — turned over about £6.13 million and made a profit of £1.14 million in the year to September 30. On its own, Jardinerie Interiors had turnover of £2.9 million. Mr Braid said that he expects turnover this year to top £6.5 million.

Trading in the company's shares is due to begin on October 31.

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Shares reach record high as factory prices rise

INVESTORS on both sides of the Atlantic were on a roll again yesterday with share prices hitting new heights in London and New York.

The better than expected factory price rise provided a new lease of life to London, allowing the FT-SE 100 index to claw back an early fall of 11 points.

A strong opening rise on Wall Street that saw the Dow Jones average climb back above the 6,000 level enabled London to finish just below its best of the day, 10.6 points stronger at a closing high of 4,038.7. That compares with the all-time high of 4,046.3 earlier this month.

But with the US bond market closed for the Columbus Day celebrations, turnover generally slipped to a low ebb. By the close of business in London less than 600 million shares had changed hands.

It seems even the big boys are taking an increasingly bullish view of prospects for investors with the likes of BZW, London's biggest securities house, lifting its year-end forecast for the FT-SE 100.

BZW has raised its estimate from 3,750 to 3,900 with 4,300 already pencilled in for 1997. BZW says that the equity market is now beginning to look attractive after the recent sharp rise in the gilt market.

British Gas led 4p to 184.5p after the industry regulator referred the price control of British Gas and its TransCo subsidiary to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. It follows British Gas's rejection of price controls.

Early attention focused on the financial sector where shares of the insurance companies were being chased higher. Speculative buying pushed Commercial Union up 9.5p to a new high of 677.5p amid suggestions that the group was in talks with ABA Amro, the Dutch bank, about a possible merger.

Others to go better included General Accident 4.5p to 743.5p and Guardian Royal Exchange 2p to 274.5p, while among the life assurance companies Lloyds Abbey, the subject of a minority bid from Lloyds TSB, rose 6p to 640p, Britannia 3p to 729p, and United Friendly 8.5p to 877.5p.

Blenheim, the exhibitions group, stumbled 10.5p to 473.5p as the expected bid from United News & Media, publisher of the Daily Express,



Go-Ahead rose 6.1p, with Thames Trains franchise completed

failed to materialise. Weekend reports suggested Reed Elsevier had decided against making a bid for Blenheim. Last week, VNU, the Dutch publisher, paid 500p a share for a 14.99 per cent stake in Blenheim.

Takeover favourite Manchester United received a further boost with the shares soaring 49p to 559p on the

Henderson Croxall, the broker, is recommending Smiths Industries ahead of half-year figures tomorrow. It is looking for pre-tax profits to grow from £163 million to £188 million and says the group can easily achieve earnings growth of between 12 and 15 per cent a year. The shares rose 13.5p to 790p.

back of weekend reports that IMG, the sports marketing group headed by Mark McCormack, was also interested in making a bid.

Highland Distilleries has paid a high price for acquiring Macallan as half-year figures revealed. Write-offs totalling £3 million relating to the subsequent reorganisation took their toll on profits, which slumped from £42.9 million to

697p. Martin Edwards, chief executive of Manchester United, has attempted to play the bid story down.

A recent visit by brokers continued to benefit Securicor, up 10.5p to 209p. Last week's visit also coincided with a "buy" recommendation from Henderson Croxall, the broker. Henderson points out that on turnover of £1.2

£37.1 million and left the shares nursing a fall of 9p at 330p. The outcome fell short of brokers' expectations and is likely to lead to a downgrading of full-year forecasts.

Some cautious words on current trading left newly merged Premier Farnell nursing a fall of 20.5p at 660p. Howard Poulson, chief executive, gave warning that conditions were likely to remain subdued well into next year.

Volume distribution was struggling. It was not what the market wanted to hear. Brokers are already aware that the acquisition of Premier will lead to earnings dilution in the current year and the drop in interim profits will not boost confidence.

Go-Ahead, the bus operator, rose 6.1p to 384p as brokers continued to ponder the benefits of the group being awarded the Thames Trains franchise. The deal has now been completed.

Waste Management International marked time at 292p after reporting a near 8 per cent increase in third-quarter profits to £42.8 million. Airtours raced up a further 15.5p to 622p as brokers continued to calculate the benefits of the group's first expansion move into the US with the creation of a new subsidiary in California.

GLT-EDGED: The London bond market made headway but with the US bond market closed, turnover fell well below recent levels.

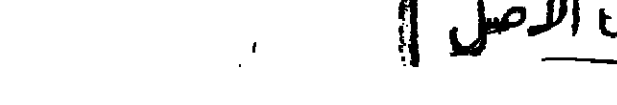
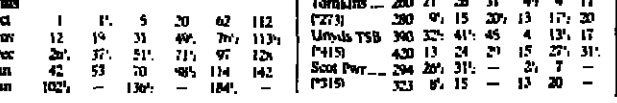
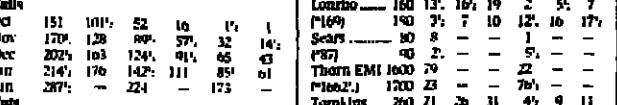
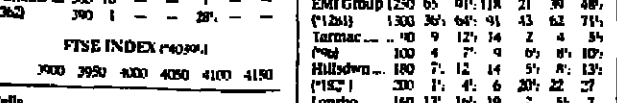
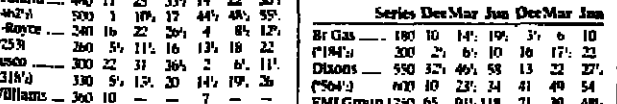
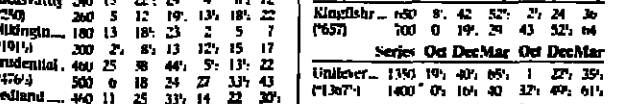
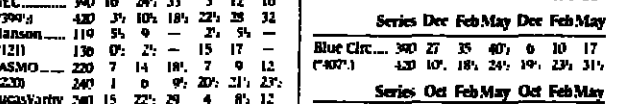
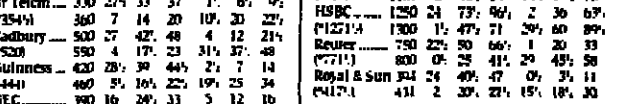
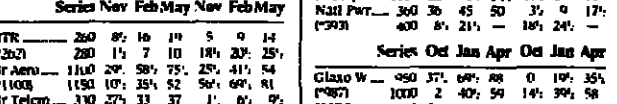
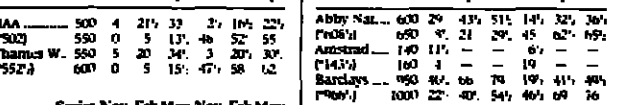
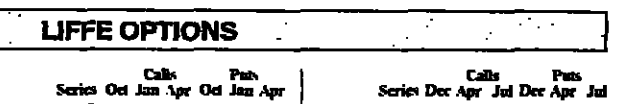
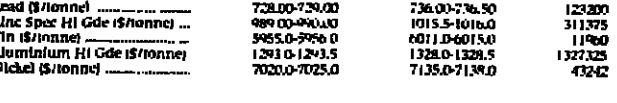
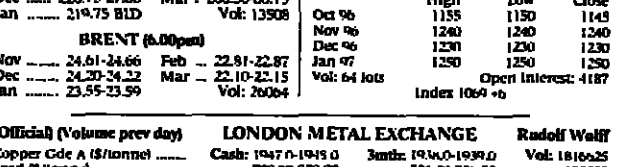
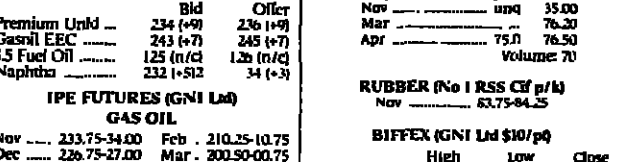
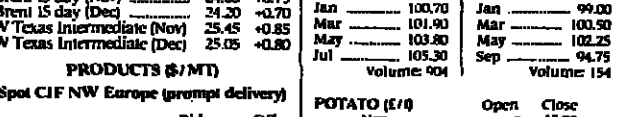
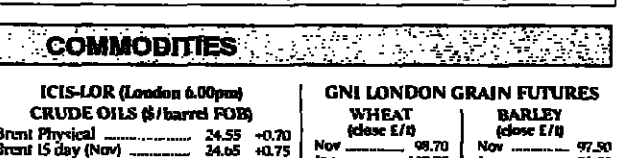
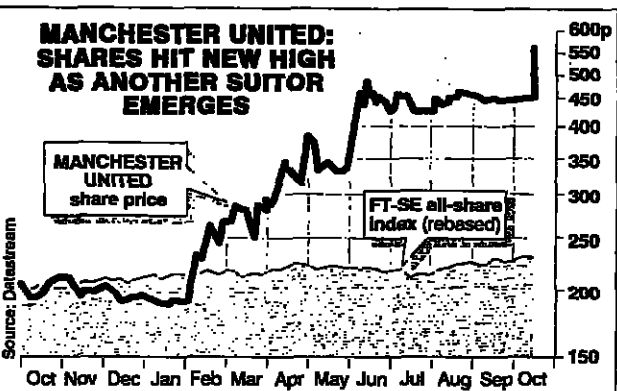
The best performance was seen in index-linked issues still reflecting on Friday's unexpected half-point jump in the inflation number.

Rises of about 1.5p were recorded with the Bank of England expected to seize the opportunity and issue further tranches any day.

In the futures pit, the December series of the long gilt rose 1.5p to £107.15 as the number of contracts completed fell well short of recent levels. A total of 22,000 had been completed by the close.

In long, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 firmed £1.12 to £101.25, while Treasury 8 per cent 2020 was a tick lower at 104.15.

NEW YORK: On Wall Street interest in oil shares and individual companies such as Intel and Caterpillar helped to boost the Dow Jones industrial average. By midday, it was 46.96 points ahead at 6,016.34.



MAJOR INDICES	
New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	6016.34 (+46.96)
S&P Composite	704.73 (+4.07)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	21029.25 (+61.09)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	12330.35 (+111.59)
Amsterdam:	
Euro Stoxx	588.91 (+7.11)
Sydney:	
DAX	2263.3 (+26.5)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	2693.88 (+7.85)
Singapore:	
Strait Times	2045.58 (+31.07)
Brussels:	
General	9822.26 (+1.92)
Paris:	
CAC-40	2143.62 (+3.58)
Zurich:	
SKA Gen	793.00 (+1.78)

RECENT ISSUES	
AEA Technology	334p
Altech	72p
Amer Opps U Ln	95p
Brunner Mond	170p
Charles Taylor	161p
Crested	82p
Delmont Elec (ISD)	160p
Elect Retail Sys	197p
Eurasia Mining	315p
Grosvenor Land	15p
Hartstone 8% CV	120p
Imperial Tobacco	395p
Internet Tech	65p
Interoute Tele	169p
Lavender	160p
Mears Group	12p
Millennium Chem	141p
Oriental Resturms	205p
Personal Number	84p
Polytek	69p
Shallburne	129p
Thistle Hotels	173p
Ultra Electronics	300p
Weeks Group	7p

RIGHTS ISSUES	
Davis Fin ULS n/p	56
FI Group n/p (105)	2
Gramplan n/p (125)	1

MAJOR CHANGES	
RISES:	
Man Utd	559p (+49p)
Cohen (A)	395p (+25p)
Canab Pharms	588p (+25p)
Hogg Robinson	264p (+10p)
JJB Sports	322p (+12p)
Securicor	292p (+10p)
Manx Telecom	355p (+12p)
MAID	313p (+10p)
Smiths Inds	790p (+13p)
Kingfisher	657p (+9p)
Salvite	84p (+9p)
Gleeson (M)	895p (+30p)
Tottenham Hot	461p (+11p)
TI	589p (+13p)
FALLS:	
Rollie & Nolan	352p (-15p)
Highland Dist	332p (-15p)
Cobham	600p (-4p)
Enterprise	579p (-8p)

CLOSING PRICES PAGE 35	
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LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES	
FTSE 100	Dec 96 4055.0 4070.0 4047.0 4070.0 688
Previous open interest: 61268	
FTSE 250	Dec 96 4475.0 0
Previous open interest: 3571	
Three Month Sterling	Dec 96 93.97 93.94 93.97 94.13
Previous open interest: 30462	
Three Mth Euro Yen	Dec 96 99.30 99.31 99.30 99.30 22
Previous open interest: 1073419	
Three Mth Euro DM	Dec 96 96.86 96.87 96.86 96.87 8778
Previous open interest: 1073419	
Long Gilt	Dec 96 110.05 110.01 110.14 23068
Previous open interest: 163075	
Japanese Govt Bond	Dec 96 122.06 122.05 122.05 122.05 3
German Govt Bond	Dec 96 98.18 98.14 98.14 98.14 67881
Previous open interest: 26699	
Three Month ECU	Dec 96 95.85 95.85 95.85 95.85 34
Previous open interest: 22904	
Euro Swiss Franc	Dec 96 96.36 96.32 96.36 96.36 3302
Previous open interest: 6573	
Italian Govt Bond	Dec 96 122.25 122.15 122.74 122.48 2936
Previous open interest: 81948	

MONEY RATES (%)	
Base Rates Clearing Banks 5% Finance House	
Discount Market Loans: Overnight 10% 4% Week fixed: 5%	
Treasury Bills (Discount): 2 mth 5% 3 mth 5% 6 mth 5% 12 mth 5%	
Prime Bank 30% (Discount)	
Sterling Money Rates:	
Overnight: open 5% close 5%	
Local Authority Depos:	
Sterling CDs:	
Dollar CDs:	
Building Society CDs:	

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)	
Currency	7 day 1 month 3 month 6 month Coll
Dollar	5.00 5.00 5.00 5.00 5.4
Deutsche Mark	5.00 5.00 5.00 5.00 5.4
French Franc	5.00 5.00 5.00 5.00 5.4
Swiss Franc	5.00 5.00 5.00 5.00 5.4
Yen	5.00 5.00 5.00 5.00 5.4

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)	
Bullion: Open \$381.20-381.50 Close \$381.40-381.40 High \$381.00-382.40	
Low \$380.00-380.50 AM: \$381.00 PM: \$380.90	
Kruggermark \$380.50-382.50 £240.00-242.00	
Platinum \$94.75 £243.75 Silver \$5.04 £13.185 Palladium \$116.50 £73.80	

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES	
MM Rates for Oct 14	
Range	
Close	
1 month	
3 month	
6 month	
12 month	

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES	
Range	
Close	
1 month	
3 month	
6 month	
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STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES	
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TEMPUS	
Battles in the air	

FOR British Airways, the bid for Air Liberté is a sideshow compared with its designs on the North Atlantic. The French carrier is minuscule, carrying 2.6 million passengers a year, a small fraction of the 100 million passengers that BA feeds through its global alliance. Nevertheless BA's aggressive pursuit of the French internal market is interesting in that it demonstrates the desperate pursuit of volume that has become the airline business.

Combining Air Liberté and BA's French carrier, TAT, would give the British airline over a fifth of the French domestic market and useful slots at Orly Airport. Success by BA in its bid for Liberté would also remove a threat to the future of TAT from AOM, the rival airline owned by Credit Lyonnais and currently up for sale as part of the rescue plan for the bank. Plans have been mooted for a

"French solution" combining AOM and Liberté, a merger that would lumber TAT with a state-subsidised hydra as competitor. A mini-merger in France is nothing to the potential to increase volume and reduce overheads on the BA and American Airline routes on the North Atlantic. Already, some City analysts are suggesting a £7 share price for BA if the deal goes through. In fact, no one has a clue what the potential benefits of co-operating will be, other than obvious gains from putting larger planes on busy routes. BA suggests it makes \$100 million from its tie-up with USAir, a less attractive alliance. If positive news on the North Atlantic is followed by share euphoria, it may prove an opportunity to sell. BA is being sued by USAir and another writ from Virgin may not be far behind.

margin catalogue sales to smaller customers. The good news is that the catalogue business, which now represents more than half of group sales and 70 per cent of profits, is apparently sheltered from the weakness in semiconductor prices.

Enthusiasts point to the opportunity of selling a wider product range to a bigger

customer list. Even so, just how many varieties of computer chip do its customers need? The danger is that a sale to a Premier client could be a sale to the Premier.

The erratic share price suggests that the jury is still out. Uncommitted investors may choose to watch this particular show from the sidelines.

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THE TIMES



CITY DIARY

HSBC's Lord of the Rings

HSBC shareholders should be watching when next year's pay packages are revealed. Last time the board tried to award itself a tidy £16 million for modest improvements. Now it has hired a relative of the fantasy novel writer J.R.R. Tolkien. Richard Tolkien, HSBC's new Lord of the Rings, will work his magic with numbers in the international corporate finance department. He is escaping from the evil spell cast on Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, where he was head of global utilities.

Naked ambition

THERE is money in pop music. Nick Thorp and Maggi Drummond, formerly members of Curiosity Killed the Cat, have sold their own record label, Naked Records, to Eidos for £250,000. Eidos, the multimedia and entertainment software company, claims Naked will become the world's first interactive record label.

An open book

COLIN SHARMAN, senior partner of KPMG, was up a ladder in Bishopsgate yesterday to herald a £1 million advertising campaign. Advertisements using books, ledgers and computer printouts arranged to form the words "open" are running in newspapers and will be displayed on poster sites. KPMG is seeking to capitalise on its decision to turn its audit arm into a limited company — open for business, but not open to law suits (or so they hope).



Grounded?

THE course of British Airways' global strategy has never run smoothly. No sooner had BA announced its plans to expand in France through the proposed purchase of Air Liberté, which filed for insolvency protection last month, than the French civil aviation authority asked all airlines to limit the number of flights in and out of France on Thursday. French air traffic controllers are again on the warpath, protesting against the Government's austerity budget for 1997.

All bets on

JONATHAN SPARKE, who runs the adventurous Spread Betting Agency City Index, has announced this week that he will be merging with Sporting Index, his main rival. Sparke has quoted prices in everything from the Dow and FT to sugar futures. Once in Dubai, for the camel races, he met the hero of the autumn Frankie Dettori. "Tomorrow, I show you Dubai," Dettori told him. "All that involved," said Sparke, "was getting into a sheikh's limo and visiting the local caviar emporium, and then returning to the hotel."

NO STOPPING Lloyd's of London. It has taken a stand for the first time at the International Motor Show in Birmingham — a means of reminding people that one in six cars on the road in the UK is covered by a Lloyd's policy. The centrepiece of the Lloyd's stand is a McLaren F1 GTR sports car — decked in Lloyd's colours.

When it comes to job creation America wins hands down

Tory claims on employment compare badly with US exploits, says Philip Bassett

Lunchtime, Bournemouth, the retirement centre of Britain's south coast. Inside the town-centre Burger King Chris Butler, the assistant manager, is serving fries and hamburgers, taking phone calls, making sure table clearers such as teenager Sarah Edmunds keep going, keep cleaning.

Prompted, no doubt, by the fast-food firm's slogan offering genuine customer choice — "You want it — you got it!" — a young mother in a Calvin Klein T-shirt asks him if she could warm a bottle of milk for her baby. She is refused. The baby carries on crying.

As customer staff rush to keep up with the demand for burgers and milk shakes, Mr Butler — early 20s, with deep lines under his eyes — is unearthing one teenage hamburger flipper by throwing an arm across his shoulders, while shouting for another: "Where? Why isn't he here? I want him serving here now!"

Lunchtime, St Petersburg — not the one in Russia but a retirement centre on the Gulf of Mexico in Florida, US. Inside the Burger King, opposite the town's Tyrone Square shopping mall, Rick Wood, the manager, is marshalling his team of burger jockeys, who are noticeably all much older than their Bournemouth counterparts, with the jobs filled by middle-aged black women and white women in their 60s.

The work, and the noise, is international. "What, honey? That's a Double Whopper." "There you go — \$3.99." "OK! You're all set!" "Fries here!" "That's double!", the inevitable "Thank you, have a good day", and "You want it — you got it!"

Once, Conservative ministers used to relish the comparison between Britain and America over jobs, holding out the vision of the UK as a mini-US: flexible labour markets, service-sector dominance, Burger King pacing Burger King across the pond.

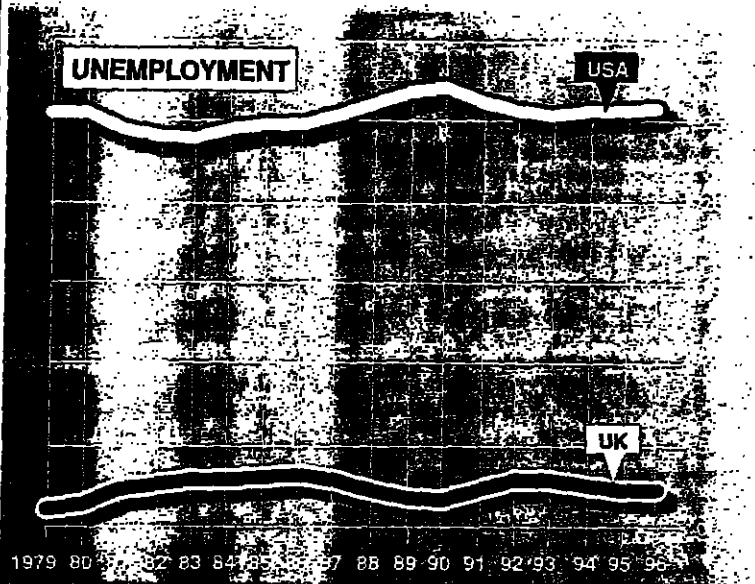
Not any more. In spite of the sensitivity of the issue in Tory circles, Europe is now the favoured benchmark, with Gillian Shephard, Employment and Education Secretary, in particular banging the UK drum across the Channel, as she did in Bournemouth last week at the party conference: "We attract more inward investment, more jobs than any other EU country, because of our flexible and deregulated labour market."

In America, since Bill Clinton took office in 1992, 10 million jobs have been created. As Al Gore, his campaign running-mate, emphasised in a vice-presidential debate televised live across America last week from St Petersburg: "We want the focus to be on millions more jobs — and we are confident it is going to happen."

Whatever its claims for Britain's economic performance under the Conservatives, the Government simply can't match that — or anything anywhere like it. Compared to the EU's job record — especially on unemployment — is good. But not over the long-term, compared to the US.

Tomorrow, Conservative ministers will be hoping to announce a further fall in UK unemployment after last month's 15,600 drop. They will certainly be hoping that the UK doesn't emulate the US's most recent job performance ten days ago — instead of a forecasted further rise of 170,000 jobs, monthly employment figures revealed

US SERVES THE JOBLESS BETTER



a surprise overall 40,000 fall for the first time since January, with manufacturing particularly hard-hit, losing 57,000 jobs. Unemployment rose from 5.1 to 5.2 per cent.

But the markets liked it, viewing it as an indicator of the economy slowing after perhaps over-buoyant growth. Even Robert Reich, the US Labour Secretary, welcomed it: "We had to have a slight deceleration in the economic locomotive to make it sustainable."

In other ways, Britain is still drawing from America. Labour's welfare-to-work programme is rooted in Bill Clinton's "tough love" welfare-to-work initiative, and Mrs Shephard's new expansion of her Project Work scheme from pilots in Hull and Kent to a much larger test of 100,000 people across the country is taking Tory labour market policy even closer to the harder end of US welfare schemes, in spite of real reservations in Conservative ranks.

The UK-US link used to be much more comfortable for the Tories. In the Reagan-Bush years, entrepreneurial America encapsulated the kind of deregulated labour market that ideologically the Conservatives wanted to see in Britain. But the election of Bill Clinton upset that particular apple cart: operationally, the US job market is still highly deregulated, especially compared to Europe — but labour market intervention and regulation

have grown under the Clinton administration, with new training schemes, welfare reform, provision legislation and, in particular, an increase in the national minimum wage. And jobs have still gone up.

Since 1979, when the Tories came to power, Britain has, overall, been poor at job creation — mainly because the two deep recessions of the early 1980s and 1990s were good at job destruction (though in the States, new research by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology demonstrates that links between business cycles and job creation faded in the 1980s and beyond).

From 1979 to 1996, UK employment grew overall by just 300,000, or 1.2 per cent. Over the same period, employment across all EU countries rose by 7.5 per cent, across all OECD member states by 24 per cent, and in the US by 28 per cent, with America putting on more than 27 million jobs.

Britain's unemployment performance overall is not much better. Throughout the lifetime of the Conservative Government, unemployment rose and fell but has ended up 1.1 million higher than it was, double the number when it came to power. This 100 per cent rise is broadly in line with the OECD average, and well behind the 166 per cent increase for the EU as a whole. But it falls well behind the much

more limited increase in US unemployment, which has risen 30 per cent since 1979. The record has been better in recent times. On unemployment, since the 1992 general election and Clinton's election later the same year, the number without work in America has fallen by 2.3 million, and by well over 600,000 in the UK — 570,000 lower than its last peak in December 1992. At the same time, unemployment has gone up by 2 million across the OECD as a whole, and by as much as 3.1 million in the EU.

With a 21 per cent fall, Britain's unemployment record since 1992 far outstrips the rise in joblessness of 6.3 per cent for the OECD, and as much as 19 per cent for the EU, and is not too far short of the 24 per cent drop in the US.

But, on employment, Britain's job-creation record is a poor 0.4 per cent, and even that is arguable since it depends on what figures are used to measure the increase. By contrast, although jobs across the EU have fallen since 1992, with a 2.4 million or 16 per cent drop, OECD countries overall have created 15.4 million jobs, up 4 per cent, mainly pushed by Japan and the emerging economies, and the US has seen a 6.6 per cent increase.

What has happened in Britain, as opposed to major competitors like the US, is that more people have simply left the labour market — become "economically inactive", as the statisticians like to call it. Since 1992, Britain's labour force has shrunk — down by more than 600,000 or 2.1 per cent, at a time when the US labour force has risen by 5.5 million, or 4.3 per cent, and even the EU has seen a 0.5 per cent increase in its workforce.

Economists regard Britain's declining workforce total as potentially threatening, with implications for its output and future growth that are concerning policymakers.

In the US, right-wing business leaders opposed to Clinton's re-election are scathing about the administration's claims over jobs, arguing that the job growth since 1992 is nothing to do with the federal government, and, if anything, may have been limited by it. They maintain that it is largely, if not wholly, due to a few key businessmen restoring corporate America by tough, downsizing decisions that have led — and are still leading — to big layoffs, but which have the effect of keeping threatened companies alive.

Whatever the reason, job growth during the Clinton years has been startling — far outpacing the much smaller degree of employment growth in Britain, although unemployment performances in the UK and US have been similar. That makes for parallels that are much more uncomfortable for UK ministers than they used to be.

Meanwhile, back at Burger King in St Petersburg, four enterprising Florida teenagers are creating work for themselves by capitalising on the endless stream of cars in and out of the parking lot — offering to wash customers' cars while they're dining, and, in the process, getting in good training for the Tampa Bay Miss Wet T-Shirt contest, to the admiring stares of teenage boys sucking milk shakes.

At Burger King in Bournemouth, such entrepreneurship looks a little distant. Instead, Chris Butler and his crew use the front windows of the restaurant to try to drum up staff. Headlined in a neat twist on the company's slogan "You got it — we want it!", a poster says: "Whether you are young or old, male or female, looking for full-time or part-time work, we may have a job for you."

With unemployment in the area below the national average, this particular lunchtime there are no obvious takers to join the UK's more limited version of the US's flexible labour market.



ANATOLE KALETSKY

Don't bait the Bundesbank

To tease a Rotweiler is unwise, even when you believe that the beast is securely chained. The same maxim applies to annoying the Bundesbank, especially if you are a politician or investor. In the past few weeks, however, large numbers of financial speculators and a handful of European leaders seem to have forgotten about the vicious maulings inflicted by the German monetary watchdog on their older and now wiser brethren.

Since the end of September, when the Italian Government announced its amazing "budget for Europe", continental markets have taken off for a fiesta at Club Med — or should I say Club Maa?

Hedge funds have been bidding up Italian and Spanish bond prices to undreamt-of levels, and investment analysts have been outbidding each other with forecasts of the effortless fortunes their clients could make by piling into bullish "convergence trades".

French long-term interest rates have undercut those of Germany by a substantial margin and the market's near-universal view is that confidence will move even further in favour of France. Meanwhile Romano Prodi, the Italian prime minister, is boasting openly about his use of accounting tricks to hit the Maastricht targets. "If the French can get away with it, we can show them a trick or two," he said last week in an interview with the *Financial Times*.

In fact, the markets no longer seem to care whether Club Med countries will actually hit their targets. "The decision will be made by politicians, not central bankers", is the market's refrain.

The Bundesbank has predictably started growling. On Monday and Tuesday last week, three of its directors, led by Hans Tietmeyer, delivered powerful speeches about the dangers of softening the Maastricht criteria in any way to allow a wider circle of countries into EMU's first round. The markets paid no attention. Now, politicians have been wheeled out.

On Saturday, taking advantage of Finland's decision to join the European exchange-rate mechanism, Theo Waigel, the German finance minister, drew attention to Italy's inability to agree with its partners on readmission to the ERM. ERM membership was an "indispensable condition" for joining the single currency, he said. Yesterday, Juergen Stark, the Finance Ministry's permanent secretary, went even further. A "one-off fiscal consolidation" to comply with the letter of Maastricht would "not be enough in a historical project of these dimensions". Since this is exactly what the Club Med countries seem to be trying to do, the implication could not have been clearer.

Why have the markets continued to ignore such warnings, which might have provoked panic selling a few months back? There are two good reasons, and two bad. The good reasons are economic. Italy has the world's biggest current account surplus, relative to its GDP. It also stands to benefit enormously from any reduction in interest rates — ironically, because its public debt is so huge. Italy's debt is roughly 120 per cent of GDP mostly financed at short-term rates. This means that a three percentage point reduction in Italian rates would reduce the Government's debt service costs by 3.6 per cent of GDP and thereby eliminate most of the budget deficit. Italy could therefore benefit more than any other country in Europe from a virtuous circle of lower interest rates, budgetary credibility and still lower interest rates.

The trouble with such virtuous circles, however, is that it can easily go into reverse. (Remember all those "golden scenarios" when Italy and Britain first joined the ERM?) This brings me to the two bad reasons for the market's self-contentment for the German warnings. The first bad reason is, Italian politics. The markets are assuming that Italy's budgetary "fundamentals" will improve, even if the country does not get into EMU in 1999.

At present, investors are not even considering such questions. The reason is that people have had such fun and made so much money in Club Med markets, they are intoxicated by greed.

But as the speculators and politicians revel, the Rotweiler's growl is getting angrier, just as it did before the ERM crises of 1992 and 1993. The Bundesbank may be chained up, but these chains have been known to break.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Companies need to find a way to provide for the 'uninsurables'

From Mr Rocco Segreti

Sir, I read with great interest that an underclass of uninsurable drivers is emerging in Britain (Car insurance underclass being frozen out, says AA, October 9).

This trend has been highlighted in recent research projects carried out by IBM with leading insurance companies from around the world. If this problem continues to grow, it may be necessary for governments to step in to take care of the uninsured. On a larger scale, Pool Re is a good example of this. As a result of the large bomb explosions in

the City, insurers are either not able or willing to cover terrorism losses, and so the Government has been forced to step in and act as the "insurer of last resort".

Our research painted a number of possible scenarios for the insurance industry in the future. In one, which we call "Big Brother", every citizen has only the amount and type of insurance protection deemed appropriate by the Government. In fact, consumers may not even deal directly with insurance at all. Changes in insurance coverage could simply "happen" when consumers move, acquire new property, experience a major life cycle change or file a claim. This world may have evolved from the emergence of a collective social consciousness or it may be a consequence of an initiative designed to avoid social unrest in a world in which the "have nots" are growing at alarming rates. However, the net effect will be the same — there will be little left for insurance companies. It is therefore imperative that they find a way to provide proactively for the "uninsurables".

Insurance companies need

Help must be given to British Gas

From Mr D. W. Taylor

Sir, Although having a good "whinge" about their troubles with British Gas may make your correspondents feel better, it will not solve them. Neither will engaging a private plumber, who is never going to be available 365 days of the year. Only doctors and British Gas will come out on Christmas Day!

Before privatisation, British Gas had a reputation as high as Marks & Spencer for service and quality. However, since then, British Gas has had its income slashed by the regulator. It has had to make experienced servicemen re-

dundant and install computer systems to reduce staff costs; both of which have led to the difficulties experienced by your correspondents.

The current regulator, Clare Sportiswood, is, in my opinion, too concerned with the price of gas to the detriment of quality and service. Her current proposals to force the price of gas even lower will obviously make the situation worse.

You ain't seen nothing yet if she gets her way!

The only way to restore British Gas to its previous high efficiency is for the regulator to stop expropriating its assets, and allow it to recover from the previous cuts. Help should also be given to British Gas to enable it to renegotiate the high price gas contracts

taken out when it was a monopoly.

Your correspondents will find it effective if they write to their MP and ask him to sort it out, with a copy to Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, and Ms Sportiswood. Yours faithfully, D. W. TAYLOR, 3 Sherwood Avenue, Ruislip, Middlesex.

Bill confusion

From Mr P. E. Wood

Sir, Like Mr Taylor (Business Letters, October 4), I too received a British Gas account after a delay of nine days. In my case, however, with no reason given, I have been credited with the full (net) amount of the previous bill which itself included a £2 plus VAT

prompt payment credit. In other words it nullified the previous account.

As well as this credit on the current account I have been charged with both the previous and present quarter's combined consumption without any allowance in respect of prompt payment. I am thus £4 plus VAT out of pocket.

How widespread this practice is I do not know, but British Gas has told me that I will be recompensed. I wait expectantly! Yours faithfully, P. E. WOOD, 6 Normanton Street, Brighton.

Letters to the Business section can be sent by fax on 0171-782 5112.

Labour's pledge to business

From the Shadow Trade Minister

Sir, In his recent interview with Philip Bassett, Ian Lang confessed that he feels "fury, just fury" when Labour maintains that it is now the party of business ("Lang confident business" will turn out for Tories, October 8). With business support for Labour now twice as strong as in 1992, the Conservatives are clearly worried.

Labour is committed to providing the training and education, the emphasis on research and development as well as the rebuilding of our infrastructure that Britain needs to compete effectively in the 21st century.

That competition will increasingly be for a share of the European market. Yet this Government's internal divisions have made it impossible for them to negotiate in Britain's best commercial interests.

A recent forecast by the Ernst and Young Item Club confirmed that "new Labour" poses "no danger" to British business.

Indeed it appears that so many people in business are changing their allegiance precisely because Labour has the policies to meet the needs of British business. Yours faithfully, GEOFFREY HOON, MP, 8 Station Street, Nottinghamshire.

ROBECCO GROUP

RORENTO N.V.

(investment company with a variable capital)

EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING OF SHAREHOLDERS

to be held on Thursday, 31st October, 1996 at the offices of Robeco Amilien N.V., Plesman 24, Willemstad, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles, at 10.30 hours.

AGENDA

1. Opening
2. To compose the Management Board
3. Closure

The only item on the agenda is the proposal to change the composition of the Management Board. As announced at the informative meeting held on 26th April, 1996, shareholders will be asked to approve the appointment of Mr G. B. Smith as a Director of the Company.

Holders of Renner Share Certificates desiring to attend or being represented at the Meeting, should lodge their Certificates by hand (postal deliveries will not be accepted for voting purposes) with the National Westminster Bank PLC, NatWest Investments, Central Securities Office, Basement, Juno Court, 24 Prescot Street, London E1 8BB (between the hours of 10.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m.) in exchange for a receipt, not later than Thursday, 24th October, 1996.

Beneficial owners whose Renner Share Certificates are presently deposited with a Bank must obtain a Certificate of Deposit signed by the Bank as evidence that such Bank is holding the Share Certificates. This Certificate must be lodged against receipt, by the Bank, with the National Westminster Bank PLC, in accordance with the requirements stated above.

The receipt for the Share Certificates or Certificate of Deposit will constitute evidence of a shareholder's entitlement to attend and vote at the Meeting and should be presented at the door of the Meeting Hall. If a holder desires to appoint a proxy, who need not be a member of the Company, to attend and vote in his stead, a form of proxy may be obtained from the National Westminster Bank PLC as above and this form of proxy must be presented at the door of the Meeting Hall together with the receipt for the Share Certificates or Certificate of Deposit.

Shareholders who maintain a Shareholder's Account with the Company, wishing to attend the Meeting or to appoint a proxy in their stead, must signify their intention in writing to the Secretary, Rorento N.V., c/o Robeco Advies N.V., Coolings 120, NL-3011 AG Rotterdam, Netherlands, to arrive not later than Thursday, 24th October, 1996.

Copies of the full agenda can be obtained from National Westminster Bank PLC at the address shown above or Robeco U.K. Limited, 4 Carfax Place, Mayfair, London W1Y 5AE. Telephone 0171-409 3507.

BY ORDER OF THE MANAGEMENT

ST. MAARTEN

Dated this 15th day of October, 1996.

Paperwork overload heaps pressure on bosses and suppliers



BY OLIVER AUGUST

A Phillips spokesman yesterday said that it would be necessary to accelerate planned actions for recovery, but declined to elaborate. "It's quite clearly an early warning," he said. "We felt that we

Steven Vrijlief, an ING analyst, suggested that Philips could "go over every division again". He added: "In our opinion, it's not only the consumer products division but there are also problems at the professional and systems division, which is not making money. They've got to just keep cutting costs everywhere they can. Eventually that will mean fewer jobs in Europe and probably also in the United States."

Graseby has spent six years developing the portable hand-held CAM in conjunction with the Swiss. The company is also developing an explosives detector to counter the terrorist threat to aviation. Graseby shares rose 2½p to 129½p.

Mr Vrolijk said that he had been forecasting 1.1 billion guilders (£407 million) net profit from normal operations for the first nine months of 1996. "That has to come down. We were not negative enough for third quarter results." He is now looking for Dfl969 million.

Tempus, page 30

Geoff Halstead, left, and Stephen Knight, financial director, saw profits edge ahead.

BY MARTIN BARROW

subsidiary, supplier of security cabins, trailers and trailer tents, which incurred a loss for the year. The company blamed "inefficiencies and poor cost control" and said it has made management changes to restore margins.

The company, whose managing director is Geoff Holstead, is paying a final dividend of 6p a share to lift the total by 8.8 per cent to 9.25p. Earnings were 23.51p a share (22.75p).

BY OUR BUSINESS STAFF

The Anglo-French company, which last week announced details of its crucial financial restructuring, said it

Bill Dix, previously chief commercial officer, is appointed managing director of Le Shuttle, while James Evans continues as director of Railway Services.

They will report to Patrick Ponsolle, Eurotunnel's executive chairman, and Georges Christian Chazot, managing director. Robert Malpas, the non-executive British co-chair-

BY NOEL FLUNG

Archer, with 4 per cent of Lloyd's underwriting capacity for 1996, operates 11 Lloyd's syndicates with capacity of \$420 million for the 1996 year of account.

THE Bombardier Global Express, the new long-range business jet, took to the air for the first time in Toronto at the weekend. The aircraft flew for two hours and 46 minutes, reaching an altitude of 11,000 ft and a speed of 210 knots. Testing continues at Bombardier's flight test centre in Wichita, Kansas. Aircraft deliveries are scheduled to begin in the fourth quarter of 1997, with certification in the second quarter of 1998.

THE TIMES

TOMORROW

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CHANGING TIMES

THE TIMES TUESDAY OCTOBER 15 1996

THE TIMES TUESDAY OCTOBER 15 1996

[illegible]



THEATRE 1

Hedda Beeby and Tish Francis celebrate a £4 million facelift for their Oxford Playhouse



THEATRE 2

From revised Restoration to uncompromising modern: Dublin's Festival had something for all

THE TIMES ARTS



THEATRE 3

A talented cast can do little to remedy the National's staging of Jonson's *The Alchemist*



THEATRE 4

... while in Derby the prolific John Godber offers unusually dark fare in *Gym and Tonic*

THEATRE: Curtain up on a lavishly reborn Playhouse; plus reviews from Dublin, London and Derby

Oxford does the honours

The Oxford Playhouse, less than 60 years old, is not one of those venerable old theatres worshipped by conservationists. Its distinction lies instead in the cast of luminaries who have trodden its stage, from Sybil Thorndike, John Gielgud, Rachel Kempson and Dirk Bogarde to Ronnie Barker, Shirley Williams and Nigel Lawson (witnesses to its close ties with the university).

Tomorrow it will reopen after a summer closure for a £4 million facelift. Seeing inside the new Playhouse a few weeks ago was intriguing, but gave few clues as to how it will look after refurbishment. Wires dangled from ceilings like roots, great brackets which will have new seats bolted to them dotted the otherwise deserted expanse of floor, walls were half-painted, and other than the decorators, electricians and joiners crawling over it, there were few of the essential people.

What was enlightening was the workmen's response to the two women showing me round, Hedda Beeby and Tish Francis, the joint theatre directors. The decorators and joiners were keen to show them how this particular fitting would work, how that door will open, how the box office counter has a wheelchair-high level.

The Playhouse reopens with the world premiere of a new piece by the Stobhan Davies Dance Company, *Affections* — the kind of show many thought would topple the Francis-Beeby regime, but which has instead revealed a new audience. There will be a proper gala opening on October 27 with Prunella Scales and Alan Bennett to raise a large part of the last £50,000 of the £4 million spent on the place. In fact, the Playhouse will be the first theatre restored with lottery money, £25 million of it.

It is nearly seven years since Beeby and Francis were appointed to run the traditional home of the Oxford University Drama Society and the Oxford Stage Company. The theatre had been closed by safety officers in 1987. They were privately warned by Oxonians that their adventurous pro-

gramming plans would soon close the place again.

The celebrity-studded inaugural gala for the by then safe theatre in April 1991 featured a play called *Same Old Moon*... and a bomb scare. To cancel or not to cancel? After investigating, the Oxford police finally said: "Your decision, ma'am." But the technicians on the production included a certain Edward Windsor, whose detective was formerly with the anti-terrorist squad and knew enough about coded warnings to recommend that the show should go on.

That kind of "luck" seems to have ridden with them. In August the creation of a fire escape revealed that rusting joists in the roof were crumbling the brick. The reopening could literally have brought the house down, but the management had prudently put aside a contingency fund which covered the £15,000 costs of repair.

"I think this is the best-run set-up I have ever been involved with," said Sir Claus Moser, the theatre's chairman, and he has been involved with a few, including the Civil Service and the Royal Opera House.

The Playhouse had been the university's property, and although the four leases were given to the theatre five years ago, the assumption that Gown rather than Town holds sway has taken a while to dispel. "We chose to ignore it rather than fight it," Beeby said. Funding is shared between the university, the county and the city, although not equally.

"We've tried to appeal to new audiences and keep the old ones," Beeby said. The proof of the pudding is in the average 70 per cent box offices,

the operating surpluses which have whittled the accumulated deficit down to a manageable £50,000, and the quality of the shows which want to use it. There is also increasing in-house production.

There have been inevitable blips — a play called *The Cemetery Club* lost enough money for its name to be almost prophetic — but the introduction of the likes of *Adventures in Motion Pictures*, *Opera Factory*, the Chalmers and the LIFT has been greeted by healthy box office returns, and the OUDS and the Oxford Operatic Society still have their place in the calendar.

Included in the new season brochure are *Opera Factory's Magic Flute*, *Griff Rhys Jones* in Ben Travers's *Plunder* (pre-West End), and no fewer than three warnings about the offence potential of certain scenes in Lindsay Kemp's *Variété*, V-Tol Dance Company's *By Force of Fantasy* and the OUDS's student production of Sobol's *Ghetto*.

The new Playhouse will be bright, with comfortable seats, luxurious leg room, somewhere convivial to eat and drink, and a hospitality room for the sponsors — "why shouldn't they have one for what they do for us?" said Francis. And backstage, the dressing rooms will have designer flooring, to make the performers feel as valued as the customers out front.

SIMON TAIT



Under wraps: Hedda Beeby (left) and Tish Francis on stage at the Oxford Playhouse

Desire on the fringe

Luke Clancy rounds up the best of the Dublin Theatre Festival

Any production in this year's official Dublin Theatre Festival will have to battle hard to match the strange energies unleashed in the fringe show, *Streetcar*. In a cramped gallery stairwell, this grotesque, Marvel-comics retelling of Tennessee Williams's drama of sex, lies and public transportation put a match to the capital's annual theatre binge.

Director Annie Ryan described her production as a *commedia dell'arte* version of the play, but the manic influences of Jim Carrey's *Mask* and Jack Nicholson's grimacing Joker were equally apparent. Using macabre face paint, and stylised rhythmic choreography, Ryan harnessed to incendiary effect the diverse talents of Gary Cooke, as Stanley, a swaggering hairball of nastiness, Liz Kuti, as Stella, madly trying to grin her way to satisfaction, Andrew Bennett, monosyllabically devastating as Mitch, and Tony Flynn in travesty as the glassy-eyed Blanche, her bodice stuffed with chintzy dreams and camp self-deception.

Closest so far to attaining the left-field power of *Streetcar* was *Starving Artist's Road Movie* (Peacock). With just a good lighting plot, a chair and a bangle, Mark Pinkosh unfurled a narrative journey across America that took in bump and grind in a New York back room, tears at Washington's Vietnam monument and cable television nirvana in a Mojave motel. Pinkosh shuffled lightly through a range of characters including a sassy condom-dispensing diva who would give *Streetcar's* Stella a run for her money — to deliver a continent in 90 gleaming, sad and defiant minutes.

In his *Stella By Starlight* (The Gate), Bernard Farrell is back in familiar territory, Dermot (Tom Hickey) is a failed Dublin apparition, who, after losing his job, uproots his wife, Stella (Marion O'Dwyer) and daughter, Tara (Janet Moran) and takes to the Wicklow Hills. Now he divides his time between DIY, his PC and rubbing up against his enormous telescope while torturing his wife and daughter with his twittering inadequacy.

On the night a comet is due to plunge into Venus, Dermot's home is visited by his nemesis, golf-obsessed Paul (Stephen Brennan) and his wayward wife, Geraldine (Gemma Craven). In the small hours, the simmering rivalry between the two men finally bubbles up, and as the recriminations fly, anyone still up is treated to a welter of clichés about the Japanese and their golf obsession, and a skimpy portrait of a working-class Dubliner that seems to cross the line into racism.

Desperate Optimists' latest devised performance, *Indul-*

gence, was inspired by Freud and Breuer's groundbreaking psychoanalytical case study of Anna O. Using a mix of dance, trance music, smoke pots, audio effects, meandering jokes and psychoanalytical confession, the company turned the Arthouse into the scene for an occasionally fraught evening.

Unfortunately, much of *Indulgence* has the vaguely thwarted air of someone who has hesitated just a little too long. The company's style, artfully casual in its intricacy, leads an audience to expect, even to hope for, a direct confrontation, without ever delivering one. *Indulgence* took the corners wider than was strictly necessary, leaving plenty of margin for error, but killing off the sense that anything risky or dangerous might happen.

The Abbey's festival offering was *She Stoops to Folly*, as "derived" by Tom Murphy from Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*, and thoroughly en-



Mark Pinkosh in *Road Movie*

Fool's gold from debased metal

The Alchemist
Olivier

WHEN Benedict Nightingale reviewed this production at its Birmingham premiere (it is a co-production mounted by the National Theatre and the Birmingham Rep), he expressed the hope that some trimming and tinkering would be done before it arrived in London. Perhaps Bill Alexander has done this, but the result of his labours is not a likeable show, nor even a comic one.

Ben Jonson is not an easy dramatist to bring into life on the modern stage, and this play, which seems a straightforward piece at first glance, almost always defies the efforts of director and cast, brimful of talent though they may be. Much happens, but every scrap of it is gulling, gulling, gulling.

The string of fools who arrive at Face's door while his master is away want to be rich or lucky in love, which in Jacobean days meant finding a rich woman. They are induced to part with their gold and sent away unsatisfied, returning later with more gold only to suffer the same disappointment, often compounded with humiliation. It's One Damn Sting After Another.

The fractious opening scene gets the play off to a bad start, from which it seldom recovers. Simon Callow (Face) and Tim Pigott-Smith (Subtle, the alchemist) call each other endless rude names, but there is no vocal excitement of a quality to make one listen to what is being said. Matters get marginally better thereafter, although what comedy the play contains is found in single lines, even single phrases, and not in the few set-piece speeches.

The play appears to be set in some post-apocalyptic future, presumably dystopic because William Dudley's set

gives us an armoured house capable of closing in upon itself and shuffling snugly inside a painted alchemical sign. Metal stairs soar upwards and out of sight, giving the stage the look of one of the dead Underground stations in *Neverwhere's* London Below.

Uncertain futures give a licence to superstition, which is no doubt the thinking here, but the nature of the

requests and the rogues' preposterous language roots the escapades so firmly in the past that contemporary parallels become too far-fetched to be taken seriously.

Callow gulls his victims in English, Welsh and Scottish accents; Josie Lawrence (a raunchy Doll Common) adds Irish with her twittering Fairy Queen. A few of the crises generate the odd laugh, but after Alexander's fine work at Birmingham this play is a disappointment.

JEREMY KINGSTON

DONALD COOPER



Josie Lawrence, Simon Callow and Tim Pigott-Smith in *The Alchemist*

Dark Godber far more illuminating

Gym and Tonic/Pow!
Derby Playhouse

literature doesn't solve this hero's problems, suggesting that the superficial optimism so grating in Godber's past work could, just possibly, be giving ground to darker, more truthful perceptions.

He also introduces a character new in his work, an elderly widow, extremely rich, dithering between eccentricity and shrewd wisdom. Marcia Warren delivers her throwaway lines with an easy panache. James Hornsby presumably does what Godber wants him to do as Don. Gilly Tompkins's voice grates on the ear but at least is audible, whereas much of what is uttered by Justine Glenon, playing two

hydro helpers, never reached Row M.

Aidan Healy's *Pow!*, directed in the Studio by Penny Ciniewicz for Paines Plough, tells of a once promising boxer trying for a comeback. As always in plays about boxing, the bout is fixed; just as inevitably, the combat doesn't develop as planned.

Healy's work is still raw, using the irritating mannerism of sentences interrupted after two words and creating a ghastly woman manager (Helen Anderson) too hysterically sarcastic to be credible. But the scenes in the ring are well imagined: Wil Johnson's bruised Ray tempts his opponent with an exposed eye before jabbing a punch, all the while delivering a commentary of unspoken thoughts. Norman Roberts's performance as the cheekier, coltish, younger Ray is excellent.

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VISUAL ART 1

Beyond the fat ladies: the National Gallery focuses on Rubens's stunning landscapes



VISUAL ART 2

... while Jane Simpson's London show casts domestic objects in a new, sculptural light

THE TIMES ARTS



RECORDING

Herbert von Karajan gets the 'Building a Library' accolade for Parsifal



TOMORROW

Ian Hart, the fast-rising actor from Liverpool, takes stock of his sudden fame

VISUAL ART: Richard Cork on a neglected side of Rubens; plus a Pop pioneer's prints and London shows

A genius for fleshing out landscapes

On a visit to the Prado some years ago I found myself in a grand room filled with dimpled Rubens nudes at their fleshest. A Spanish guide entered, leading a posse of tourists, and announced: "Here, ladies and gentlemen, is the master of the chubby women." His audience sniggered, as he knew they would. And I soon realised, from their reactions to particular paintings, that the joke prevented them from seeing Rubens's work as anything more than a gross celebration of female bodies with a weight problem.

Four Rubens has been dogged by similar remarks whenever his art is displayed, and they caricature the achievements of an outstanding painter. Now the National Gallery has hit on an excellent way of letting us see him anew. By devoting itself to his landscapes alone, this hugely stimulating show concentrates on Rubens's capacious imagination at its most personal, direct and innovative.

Not that he started out with landscape as his overriding goal. Rubens took a surprisingly long time to mature as an artist, and his formidable ambitions focused on mastering the human figure. He first appears in Christopher Brown's exhibition as a man willing to collaborate with Paul Bril, whose large *Landscape with Psyche* was probably painted in Rome and then sent to Rubens in Antwerp. He simply added the eagle and the figure in the foreground — a diminutive woman dwarfed by the drama of Bril's craggy hillside and waterfall. Five years later, Rubens was still prepared to add the naked figures of Adam and Eve to an elaborate landscape painted by Jan Breughel the Elder. By then, however, he had already decided to explore his own growing fascination with the countryside.

A consummate draftsman, Rubens always made a point of going outdoors and making preparatory studies, even of mundane weeds and undergrowth. His early *Pond with Cows and Milkmaids* is enlivened by a rapturous involvement with willows, tree-stumps and the reeds sprouting so thickly at the water's edge. Both women and animals seem incidental, confined to a corner and stiffly defined in comparison with the vigour of



Milkmaids with Cattle in a Landscape ('The Farm at Laeken'): "Rubens integrated figures, animals and countryside in a boisterous hymn to the natural world"

the vegetation around them. They could almost have been added by another artist, but within a couple of years Rubens proved himself triumphantly able to integrate figures, animals and countryside in a boisterous hymn to the abundance of the natural world.

Milkmaids with Cattle in a Landscape, more commonly known as *The Farm at Laeken*, places the two young peasant

women at the very centre of the foreground. Rubens delights in their comeliness, and lets a basket of fruit spill out of the basket on one milkmaid's head. But a nearby wheelbarrow is heaped with an even more bountiful harvest of vegetables, and their richness is at one with the fertility of the land all around.

We can sense Rubens's growing confidence when, around 1620, he

painted a lyrical panel of a shepherd with his flock and then, soon afterwards, incorporated much of its composition in a grander, more fluent and ambitious painting usually known as *The Watering Place*. The smaller of the two paintings is impressive enough, juxtaposing the calm of shepherd and animals with the intense drama generated by the sunset flaring on the other side. But *The Watering Place* is even more

so. Peasants, cows, horses and sheep are fused with their heavily foliated locale to a far more convincing extent. The tousled young man riding his mount into the river typifies the insouciance of Rubens himself, who orchestrates the tangled trees rearing from the rocks above with swagging aplomb. He knows, by now, exactly how to alternate between areas of knotted complexity and places

where one or two trunks are allowed to stand, in near-silhouette, against a sky alive with an apprehension of nature's inherent dynamism. The countryside is never seen as a static arena; it seems to shift and grow as our eyes travel across the painting's agitated surface.

Nor did he content himself with animating the foreground, and leaving more distant stretches to

settle into quiescence. It is no accident that he returned, time and again, to the subject of a wagon fording a stream. For Rubens likewise insisted on crossing over, in his imagination, from one part of the landscape to another in his agile determination to project himself into the depths of each perpetually receding scene.

During his last bout of landscape painting, in the mid-1630s, he entered into an even more supple, rapt and energetic engagement with the rural world. His purchase of Het Steen, a substantial residence set in an ample estate, ignited an even keener desire to consummate a love affair with countryside. He could now claim truly as his own. Some of the smallest panels he painted then, like the exalted oil study of willows set ablaze by the sinking sun beyond, are so direct and freely brushed that they could easily have been executed on the spot.

The climax of his infatuation can be found in two prodigious panels painted, almost certainly as a pair, around 1636. One, the ferily brushed *Landscape with a Rainbow*, cannot be lent by the Wallace Collection. The terms of the donor's bequest forbid it, and the full-size colour reproduction jarringly included in the show is no substitute.

The companion panel, an autumnal panorama where the Het Steen estate is exuberantly surveyed with the aid of a luminous early morning sun, looks equally triumphant. Like the hunter stalking his prey behind a flowering blackberry bush in the foreground, Rubens pursues his subject with eagerness, cunning and absolute resolution. His unfettered brush leads our eyes out and away from the sheltered house and into the open plain, taking flight with the ease of a bird and winging far across the meadows towards a verdant, infinitely desirable horizon. The sensuality of Rubens's obsession with his favourite region is conveyed here at full strength. No wonder he always kept this heady, miraculous painting in his own possession: it is the most heartfelt of all his landscapes.

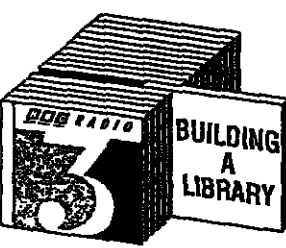
● Rubens's Landscapes, sponsored by Esso UK, is at the National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, WC2 (0171-839 3321) from tomorrow until Jan 19

CLASSICAL CHOICE

A guide to the best available classical music recordings, presented in conjunction with Radio 3

WAGNER'S PARSIFAL
Reviewed by David Hockley
WAGNER'S last opera, premiered in 1882, is often regarded as a Christian work, but it is more helpful to regard it as a study of the psychopathology of religion. Even more than that, *Parsifal* allegorises the conflict between emotional and sexual manipulation, represented by Klingsor and his unwilling accomplice Kundry, and the development of Parsifal's capacity for compassion. Because of Wagner's obnoxious racial views, which reached an alarming climax while he was at work on the score, it has become more fashionable than ever to debate how far he intended an anti-Semitic subtext.

The importance of *Parsifal* cannot be over-estimated. Debussy called it "one of the loveliest monuments of sound ever raised to the serene glory



of music". It is such an elaborate monument, though, that no recording is perfect.

Of the 11 versions currently available on CD, Georg Solti's version (Decca) is very respectable, but his orchestral tone, though impressive, tends to be a bit heavy-handed. Armin Jordan's recording (Erato) brings together an effective cast but fails to work from an orchestral point of view.

Excellent though Daniel Barenboim's *Parsifal* (Teldec) generally is, he is let down by Matthias Holl's Gurnemanz.

Gunther von Karnten's Klingensor is a little colourless.

Herbert von Karajan's Kundry, Dunja Vejzovic, does not have such a mature voice, though she does bring an appropriate other-worldly quality to the role. Karajan's Gurnemanz, however, is the unsurpassable Kurt Moll and there is an excellent Klingensor in Siegmund Nimsgern. Peter Hofmann's Parsifal is rather strained. Even so, his silvery tone is more appropriate than Jerusalem's for Barenboim.

The orchestral style of Barenboim and Karajan is similar. Both adopt sensible speeds and coax sumptuous playing from the Berlin Philharmonic, but Karajan (Deutsche Grammophon, 413 347-2, £49.95) offers the more lyrical approach, creating the orchestral "cloud layers" which Debussy described as being illuminated as from behind.

● To order the recommended recording, with free delivery, please send a cheque payable to The Times CD Mail to 250 Western Avenue, London W3 6XZ or freephone 0500 418149; e-mail: bid@mail.bogo.co.uk. Next Saturday on Radio 3 (3pm): Chopin's Waltzes

AROUND THE GALLERIES

PERHAPS Jane Simpson's sculptural work on all three floors at Laurent Delaye has been installed too sparsely. She casts domestic objects and soft rubber, connecting them occasionally to working refrigeration units. A nest of occasional tables is held up on the floor in an entanglement of wobbly crossed legs at one end of a space, while a real table slowly frosts up to hide the identity of a hastily abandoned set of keys and metal cup beneath a crusty accumulation of frost at the other. Jane Simpson's *Material Girl*, Laurent Delaye Gallery, 22 Barrett Street, St Christopher's Place, London W1 (0171-629 5905) until Oct 26

□ A THICK layer of sand on the floor slows progress across the space. The sand mounded high in the middle by Luigi Gelati has an off-cut of cheap red carpet laid on top. Andreas Rüdiger's small and delicate still-life paintings on board carry their own spatial autonomy. David Medalla is represented by a large laserprint photograph of a ship in a bottle. Sophie Rickett's set of elegant black and white photographs of a road junction and Marco Bottoni's picture of Pinocchio's family also contribute well to a deliberately unthematic show. Stracato, The Media Centre, 131-151 Great Titchfield Street, London W1 (0171-738 6662) until Oct 20

□ SMALL television monitors showing angled shots of small-scale models convey a disturbing sense of place. A bathroom, a staircase, two long and tacky hotel corridors, have each been made up by Gary Perkins with a combination of artistic licence and model-maker's ingenuity. Perkins hints at the back-to-front relationship between invented reality and real object by showing the object of surveillance and resulting image side by side. Gary Perkins, Victoria Miro Gallery, 21 Cork Street, London W1 (0171-734 5082) until Oct 18

Dots and a dash of sculpture

Twenty-eight years ago pioneer Pop artist Gerald Laing created a series of silk-screen prints of his most avant-garde pictures, starlets, skydivers, dragsters and Brigitte Bardot, all painted in dots. Now these forgotten prints have emerged at Whitford Fine Art, rekindling Laing's reputation as a rival to Roy Lichtenstein.



BB (1968) by Gerald Laing

Laing's work in the early Sixties, along with Lichtenstein's, stemmed from commercial images in which life was like a beach-party movie. Both chose to work on a gigantic scale and to use dots. However, Laing's approach was romantic in seeking out heroic icons. Disappointed by reality, he glorified images of perceived perfection.

The printing process of the billboard posters, magazines

and newspapers where such icons were found captured the imagination of both artists. Laing says he was fascinated by the way a medley of dots on a massive canvas could at a distance turn into a recognisable form. A head and shoulders of Bardot superimposed with an annular disc was Laing's earliest major

work, based on a *Young Contemporaries* exhibition advertisement.

He moved to New York, where *Life* magazine became one of his main sources of inspiration. Laing's *Skydivers* originated in a photograph of a red and white striped parachute collapsing. His *Dragsters* were initially based on a snapshot of champion driver Don "Big Daddy" Garlis.

In 1968 Laing hand-printed the current series, but many were put into store after his dealer switched to selling Old Masters. Disenchanted with New York, Laing quit America and immersed himself in rebuilding a ruined castle at Kinkell in Scotland.

By the early Seventies he was concentrating on abstract, landscape-related sculpture. Then one summer dawn, after a party, he found himself

sitting beneath the Royal Artillery Memorial at Hyde Park Corner sculpted by Charles Sergeant Jagger.

The heroism of the sculpture, he recalls, overwhelmed him. Laing enthusiastically began to turn towards a more representational style and now has his own bronze foundry in the grounds of his castle, where he has created a number of vivacious realistic and often oversized sculptures. The last two of his four rugby players commissioned for the four piers of the Rowland Hill Gate at Twickenham are to be installed in November. They are outstandingly powerful. His new work has all the drama of his "dot" paintings and more.

ALISON BECKETT

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For further details contact the Institute of Art and Law at 47 Francis Street, Leicester, LE3 2BE; tel: 01533 444 8870.

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS TRAVEL

TUESDAY OCTOBER 15 1996

Rushing from A to B in real comfort

Sir Michael Bishop, the shrewd and well-respected chairman of British Midland, is convinced that Europe's business travellers have had enough of watching the pennies, sticking rigidly to ever tighter budgets and being forced to rub shoulders — literally — with leisure air passengers.

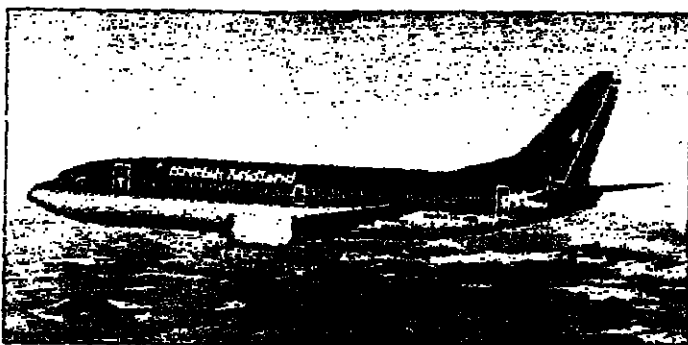
His instincts are backed by a new survey from *Visa International* which indicates that Britain's business travellers are beginning to rebel against the pressures and stresses of the cut-throat climate of the 1980s. They now want to put their travel time to more effective use — and that means taking more time on board for relaxation.

Despite the apparent unstoppable rise of the "no frills" airlines and the continuing demand for ever lower air fares, Sir Michael is prepared to spend heavily in giving pride and status back to the domestic as well as the European business traveller.

He does not believe that budget airlines will find it easy to succeed in Europe and he is convinced that the long-term profitability of British Midland is more likely to be assured by business travellers prepared to pay £230 for a full unrestricted return fare between London and Glasgow than by leisure travellers paying £58 for a heavily restricted Apex return.

Sir Michael is to introduce better meals and novel "concertina" seats which stretch to accommodate a business traveller and then shrink back to the shoulder-rubbing closeness of economy class travel. Business class lounges are to be

Harvey Elliott on the business of travel throughout Europe and what clients can expect for their money



British Midland is giving status back to the business executive

built at key airports with new machines to enable passengers with hand luggage to "swipe" their credit card for instant boarding passes. The same standards of service will be given throughout both domestic and intra-European business class.

Domestic air services are now one class. But there are up to eight separate fares depending on when the ticket was booked and on the number of restrictions attached to it. Yet regular business travellers are irritated when they sit beside someone who may have paid half as much as they did and yet who get the same standard and quality of service. There is no incentive to pay more with only one class, British Midland says.

The problem is that this means

that business fares will remain high — a phenomenon which is already concerning Neil Kinnock, the European transport commissioner. He claims that on many EC routes, fares are often "significantly higher than costs". He is threatening to launch an inquiry into excessive pricing on fully flexible business class tickets.

But business travellers — even on such short routes as Heathrow to Glasgow or from Heathrow to Paris — expect to be treated rather well. As the economy improves and the bells can be loosened just that little bit, they seem prepared to pay for it too.

On average, European business travellers spend a third of their working life — 52 hours a month — travelling for business. One in four

complain of the rules imposed by their head offices which means them flying at unsociable hours, using designated airlines, staying in inconveniently sited hotels and being forced to use economy class travel, says the *Visa* survey.

Business travel is on the increase both in short and long-haul routes. It is the business traveller who has triggered the enormous structural changes in the industry, epitomised by the planned alliance between British Airways and American Airlines.

Both have realised that business travel crosses all national boundaries and that the businessman with a company in Barcelona who has to fly to America has to go through a major "hub" airport to catch a long distance flight. That change can be made at Madrid, Paris, Frankfurt or London and the overriding criterion which will decide which he chooses is the ease of booking and the number of transatlantic flights available.

Lufthansa, KLM, SAS and others have already made arrangements with American Airlines which are designed to attract these vital "feeder" passengers.

But it is a trend which does not please Richard Branson, whose Virgin Atlantic has achieved an enviable reputation for service and quality among business passengers. Over the past ten years his airline has taken a 5 per cent share of the entire market between Europe and America and is rapidly expanding its operations on other long haul business routes. But with no natural "feed" of passengers from smaller cities to



Europe's business people expect excellent service, and are prepared to pay more for it

help to fill the 400 or so seats on its jumbo jets, the airline is bound to be squeezed by those who do. American and BA claim that if the alliance goes ahead and Heathrow is thrown open, competition is

bound to lead to a lowering of fares and further improvement in the quality of service. Virgin predicts that BAA will eventually have a monopoly and that business fares especially will then soar.

For millions of European business travellers — even more so than the airlines involved — the decisions taken by regulatory bodies and governments within the next few weeks could be vital.

Eurostar finally gets up to speed

Steve Keenan on a company that now has the powerful marketing of Virgin behind it

The Virgin takeover of Eurostar marketing this autumn gave business travel through the Channel Tunnel its biggest fillip to date. The company brought its airline expertise to bear on the rail service to Paris and Brussels and this was reflected immediately in pricing, advertising and marketing.

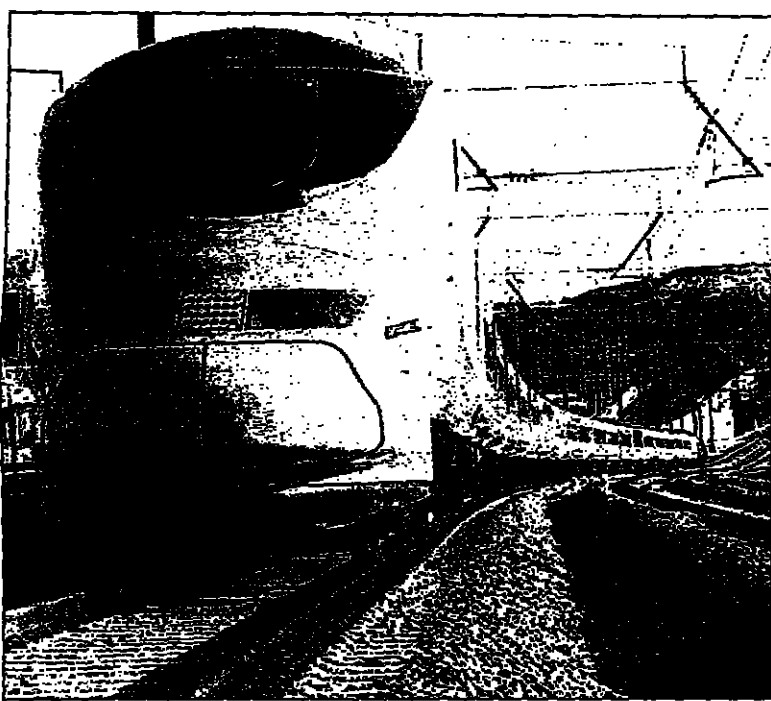
Virgin inherited a service that has already largely overcome the technical problems which plagued Eurostar in its first two years. It also inherited an expanding departure schedule — 14 daily services to Paris and eight to Brussels — which now matches those of airlines and fulfils a key business travel criterion of frequency.

But its growth — from 3.9 million to 6.4 million passengers in the year to August 1996, an increase of 64 per cent — has largely been in the leisure market, which has low profit margins. Virgin is looking to chase the floating business traveller with a series of enhancements and service initiatives, and a new pricing structure also introduced on October 1.

Virgin has copied its airline structure in having four classes of travel and introducing a new top-tier level, Premium First. The old First is now Business First, followed by Economy Plus and Standard.

The addition of Premium First means that Eurostar has bumped up ticket prices to £352 return from £265, the Business First fare. For the extra £87, travellers receive free car parking at Ashford and, to follow, a free taxi or chauffeured motorbike.

But they also have the option of flying out or back by British Midland on a fully interchangeable ticket, a big bonus for business travellers who often change plans at the last minute. For both Premium and Business



Eurostar has met key business travel agents to discuss improvements

First passengers, innovations this month include cutting check-in times to ten minutes, express check-in aisles and business lounges. A free standard return ticket comes with both classes and a frequent traveller points scheme will follow.

Eurostar has also got to grips with allowing ticket changes to be made over the telephone, rather than having to issue new tickets and forcing travellers to apply for refunds. Meanwhile, ticket dispensers have been installed in business travel agencies and are linked to computer reservation systems (crs), allowing immediate ticketing.

Such measures are specifically aimed at driving up profits from the business travel market while addressing weaknesses in the product. A Eurostar team recently met key business travel agents to discuss other areas where improvements could be made.

The innovations go some way to

addressing grievances between the two camps, particularly on the collection of tickets at Waterloo where long queues at busy times have meant waiting up to 30 minutes. One in five business travellers collect Eurostar tickets on departure.

Mike Platt, director of commercial affairs at Hogg Robinson, says: "We would like to see a much smoother or automated way of picking up tickets. It is a source of irritation which Eurostar has vowed to put right."

The complaint was echoed by Brian Cronk, the commercial director of Carlson Wagonlit. "It isn't improving — there are good days and bad days and it is sometimes chaos at Waterloo," he says. "It needs a dedicated area for people travelling First Class."

He said Eurostar's reservation system was also incapable of booking seats next to each other and suggested that the service should provide a quiet working carriage.

Business travel agents are also asking whether the new top fare of

£352 can be justified. Mr Platt says: "Each train has 800 seats to fill, so it could be argued the price shouldn't be so high."

But there are early signs that a Eurostar price war is on the cards. Virgin is one of six companies in the London & Continental consortium which took over Eurostar's UK franchise and will build the new rail link from London to the tunnel.

However, the Eurostar service is also one-third owned by SNCF French Railways and Belgian Railways. SNCF is approaching firms that speed heavily with offers of a corporate discount. Eurostar UK has responded in kind, while offering a joint discount agreement for both Eurostar and Virgin Atlantic.

Competition between SNCF and Eurostar UK towards offering cheaper fares or bigger corporate discounts is almost inevitable. There is no doubt of Eurostar's appeal to business travellers as the service has already taken more than half the air market to Paris and Brussels.

Passenger numbers flying between Heathrow and Paris CDG fell by 30 per cent last year from a peak of 3.3 million in 1993. On October 28, Air France follows Air UK and British Midland in ending flights to Paris Orly airport, instead of building services to Paris CDG to profit from travellers connecting with its long-haul network.

Carlson Wagonlit saw its air revenue to Paris fall by 30 per cent last year, while Eurostar revenues rose by 60 per cent.

The company also saw a 24 per cent increase in Eurostar passengers changing trains at Lille or Paris for other cities in France.

While the appeal of Eurostar has largely been restricted to date to users in central London or Kent, the planned expansion of Eurostar services from cities throughout the UK will also heighten its profile. Daytime services from Manchester and Birmingham start in March, and from Glasgow in June, calling at other UK stations en route. Overnight trains to Paris are due to follow.

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Top hotels cash in on executive five-star fever

Business hotels are commanding higher rates as demand from executive travellers reaches its highest point since the late 1980s. A survey from the consultants Arthur Andersen shows that the average rate for a London luxury hotel is, for the first time, more than £200 a night, and that such top London hotels as the Berkeley, Langham, Grosvenor House, and the Savoy are nearly all during the crucial midweek period.

"If you turn up during the week and expect a room on the spot, then you will probably be unlucky," said Tim Steel from Arthur Andersen.

The highest average room rate among 20 hotels surveyed was £282, although Andersen declines to name rates at individual hotels because of the survey's confidentiality.

For the first time, North Americans are the biggest single source of guests for London luxury hotels, accounting for just over 36 per cent, with continental Europeans, at 20.4 per cent, just ahead of British-based guests.

London is not alone in experiencing higher rates, according to business travel agency Hogg Robinson. "The general increase in hotel rates worldwide reflects both a growing general demand for hotel accommodation and a renewed interest in more expensive rooms," said Carolyn Moore, Hogg Robinson's divisional manager for hotels.

"There is evidence that some travellers who had to downgrade from four and five star hotels during the recession are now becoming confident enough to return to them."

The more common trend, which is leading to higher average room rates, is to upgrade to more expensive rooms in the same hotels. Companies tend to be booking 'executive' rooms instead of the

Business travellers want to feel good, and now they're happy to pay for the privilege, says David Churchill

'standard' rooms more commonly requested in 1995.

According to the Hogg survey, Japan and Russia remain the most expensive countries to visit on business travel: Japan's average room rate rose almost 28 per cent this year in comparison with 1995.

Hong Kong moved from fourth place to top in Hogg's survey as the world's most expensive city, with an average rate of £155; London came 41st out of the 83 cities monitored.

In Western Europe, Italy experienced the biggest jump in average room rates — up 11 per cent — while Belgium, The Netherlands and Germany saw their rates decline. "German cities such as Cologne and Berlin have softened their rates and are offering discounts even during their peak 'trade fair' periods," said Moore.

Although business travellers appear more willing to pay higher room rates, there is still concern over extra charges imposed by hotels. The Institute of Travel Management, which represents corporate travel buyers, last week met with representatives of the leading hotel chains to voice that concern. The managers argued that extra room charges could add at least 20 per cent to room prices.

While many executives avoid the excessive surcharges imposed by hotels on telephone calls by using a mobile phone or special calling card such as offered by BT, AT&T

and others, the newest area of concern is hotel laundry services and costs.

A survey by *Business Traveller* magazine concluded that "too many hotels appear not to have adjusted their laundry services in line with their guests' demanding travel patterns".

Andrew Solun, an ITM member and travel manager for Innarsat, the satellite communications company, said: "What is the use of having a laundry service from 9am until 7pm, when travellers turn up at 10pm and are away for a meeting or to catch a flight at 7 o'clock the next morning?"

According to the *Business Traveller* survey, European hotels have some of the highest laundry and dry cleaning charges in the world, with London coming out top of the 22 cities surveyed.

Hotellers prefer to focus on their efforts to win business travellers through other facilities, especially in-room technology. Following on from developments in the US, the leading hotel chains such as InterContinental, Marriott and Hyatt all believe the trend in business travel is for executives to want an office in their hotel rooms.

Most of the main business chains offer dual telephone lines, voice mail, modem links and computer access points, along with large desks, ergonomically designed chairs and better lighting.

Some hotels also have personal computers available, with the newly-opened Lindner Congress Hotel in Frankfurt claiming to be the first in Europe to offer a PC terminal in all its 315 rooms. Rooms have a modem, fax machine and multi-function ISDN phones with voice mail.

Claiming to be Europe's most technologically advanced hotel, it also has in-room television which offers 35 cable and satellite channels, 30 in-house video channels and eight Nintendo computer games installed.

Even small hotels are embracing new technology: the Chesterfield in Mayfair, central London, claims to be the first hotel in Europe to introduce an Internet service in all its 110 rooms. The system uses in-room televisions to provide a specially compiled Internet software package. Guests use a handheld keyboard similar to a television remote control to access electronic editions of thousands of newspapers and magazines from all over the world. The system is tailor-made to the Chesterfield's guest profile — mainly overseas business people — and also offers Internet web sites on business, finance, sport, weather and London entertainment news.

"We thought it would be useful for guests to come in, switch on their television and be able to read their hometown newspaper on the screen," said Peter Wood, general manager.



Duty-free shopping at Heathrow, which took £347 million last year from retail outlets. Britons are the biggest shoppers in Europe

EU presses on with tax law

The countdown is well under way to the abolition of duty-free shopping in the UK, ending the seemingly innocuous pleasure of buying a cheap bottle of whisky or case of wine.

The failure of Eurotunnel earlier this year to bring forward the scrapping of duty-free means shoppers have until June 30, 1999, to enjoy it.

The European Union insists that duty-free is incompatible with single-market laws. But the lobby points out that duty-free is a £12 billion worldwide industry — of which Europe accounts for half — and says duty-free creates jobs, reduces airline prices and that its demise is unnecessary.

"The loss of duty-free income will have a serious impact on our revenue. Airport traffic charges could rise by up to 25 per cent and fares by 10 per cent," says Birmingham airport retail manager Steve Hodgkins.

But while lobbying to retain the system continues, the airports and the ferry companies are working on the basis that the privilege will go. It will be as hard on the retailers as the customers, the seven BAA airports in particular having become increasingly dependent on shopping income since the capping of airport charges by the Government.

Heathrow, helped by the weakness of sterling, earned £347

Steve Keenan reports on what the loss of duty-free shopping will mean

million from retail in the year to March 31, 1996, compared with £258 million from airport charges and £135 million from its property division.

The airport took two-thirds of the £550 million earned by all seven BAA airports. Gatwick taking £138 million and Southampton, Stansted, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen sharing the rest.

The story is repeated elsewhere. Newcastle airport saw retail income up 19 per cent last year, helped by new outlets in a £5.7 million extended terminal complex. This month Birmingham extended its shopping area by 170 sq metres to include swimwear, Timberland, Guinness and photographic products.

"Duty-free revenue is a very important stream of income and a vital element in assisting us to finance the future development of Birmingham International Airport," says managing director Brian Summers.

Duty-free sales also represent vital income for the ferry operators. Eurotunnel has more than trebled its shopping area at Folkestone to 24 tills, taking close to £1 million a week. The British are the

biggest shoppers in Europe. Two in five will buy duty-free goods, easily outstripping the 25 per cent of Germans who stop to shop.

The rapid development and diversification of goods at Heathrow was reflected in this month's *Business Traveller*, in which the airport leapt from fourth to top slot in a 1996 poll on the best duty-free airport. It pushed Amsterdam into second slot, followed by Singapore Changi, Dubai and Gatwick. The airport rated worst is New York JFK, followed by Los Angeles, Bangkok, Bombay and Hong Kong.

But although the airports and ferries are cashing in while they can, they are not sitting back and waiting for the 1999 deadline. With the EU fixed in its attitude, the shift towards tax-free shopping is inexorable. Once past passport control, the ferries, airlines and airports can sell VAT-free goods, often with further discounts off High Street prices. And it is tax-free that is growing.

There is a Beauty Centre and Selfridges at Heathrow; Austin Reed and Next stores at Gatwick; a Virgin megastore at Paris Charles de Gaulle and at Amsterdam Schiphol airport, an entire

shopping centre with 120,000 items. Airports like Schiphol and Dubai have international reputations for their scale of shopping, travellers often deliberately flying via them to take advantage.

Britain's airports are only beginning to catch up, attempting to squeeze more space out of terminals not designed to be shopping arcades.

At Gatwick, BAA is trying another development — electronic shopping. Galleria Twenty-One is a computer screen display, enabling travellers to order and send flowers, for example, and pay by swiping a credit card.

Technology is the one bonus for the airlines, envious of airport and ferry capacity and constrained by space and weight restrictions. Many airlines have now incorporated shopping channels in seatback videos, allowing passengers to collect goods at their airport on arrival.

Air 2000 this summer also spent £500,000 on an on-board computer to speed up credit card transactions and improve tracking of sales and inventory which, in tests, increased sales by 5 per cent.

However, the prospect of 1999 holds little fear for the airlines. "We receive a negligible income from duty-free sales, so our operations and ticketing will not be greatly affected," says a spokeswoman for Air France.



The Intercontinental in Singapore puts executives in the lap of luxury

As of October 27:

First across the Chann

Hertz has been advertising on television in Britain for the first time in a decade, a sure sign that money is back in a sector that has been in the doldrums for many years.

In common with other aspects of business travel, income from car hire fell in the first half of the 1990s and has only recently picked up, enabling rental firms to put up prices by 15 per cent this year. Some rental companies will not accept one-day bookings, particularly midweek, and the average length of rental has crept up to 4.3 days.

The recession has forced rental firms to become leaner. Their customers have much tighter travel policies and are demanding more for their money. The bonus for car hire firms is that technology has had such an impact on the sector that quicker pre-booking, collection and drop-off of cars and detailed billing is now a standard feature.

Hire firms know that business travellers require, above all, lack of hassle. The need to pick up and drop off a car as quickly as possible is a prime consideration when choosing a rental company.

But they also know that hiring a car is an unglamorous aspect of business travel for most people, a functional mode of transport lacking the appeal of an airline or hotel room. Loyalty is earned by service and a host of extras such as bonus points schemes, mobile phones or laptop computers and in-car computers giving routes and traffic information.

The firms have to tackle two markets: individual business travel hirers and the corporates, who between them account for more than half of all car rentals booked in Britain.

Hire firms ride again

Car rental companies are regaining customers. Steve Keenan reports

Working with a business travel agency is one of the most important keys to a corporate heart. A survey by Avis showed that more cars were hired because of agency recommendations than because of prices. Another important factor in car rental is the alliances between car rental and airline or hotel companies. The use of one gives discounts or upgrades on another.

Hertz recently joined Lufthansa's loyalty scheme and has relationships with British Airways, Air France and Alitalia. It also has marketing deals with Eurotunnel and even Disneyland Paris. Meanwhile, Dollar customers now benefit from American Airlines and Alamo hirers with Hyatt.

TWA, United and Northwest, among others. Avis, remarkably, has alliances with 33 airlines.

Trying to buy loyalty is crucial to car hire firms, as in any other sector of business travel. But it is in technology that some of the most important distinctions are made.

The Wizard reservations system used by Avis, one of the longest-established in the field, used to be double as a fleet management system.

Firms can discover how often executives rent cars, what grade and for how long. Rental agreements can also be drawn up in advance, so keys can be picked up from an automated booth which tells them the key number. Speed of service is particularly im-

portant at airports, which account for 27 per cent of corporate spending on car rental.

Hertz has taken the process further at Heathrow, where members of its El Club Gold programme see their name and parking bay displayed. The documents and keys are in the car, and identification is required only at the gate. Gold rentals now account for 30 per cent of Hertz business at airports and the programme is one of the main thrusts of its TV advertising campaign.

Companies such as Europcar, Eurodollar, Hertz and Alamo also issue customers with credit card-style ID cards through which data including payment details and driving licence can be accessed quickly in booking cars.

Eurodollar recently issued new cards, available to customers paying direct and with credit facilities linked to a company account, either of which can be swiped through a reader in the branch. The company was also the first rental firm offering quotes on the Internet, but without a booking facility, while its management system is now available in a Windows format.

For a few business travellers, style is more important than management systems or access to an airline loyalty scheme. Alongside standard Vauxhalls or Fords, the range of hire cars for hire now includes Ferraris, Jaguars — even Harley-Davidson motorbikes.

Budget makes a point of offering luxury cars. They include a Jaguar XJS for £149 a day or £649 for a week, and a Mercedes C-class Elegance for £69 daily or £345 for the week. The company also has three Harley-Davidsons at Heathrow from £99 a day.



Hertz's TV ad: a sign of increasing demand for car hire

iel-last back.*

You can now be in Zurich by 9 a.m., board a connecting flight before 10, and beat many London nonstops to your European destination. After business, take an early evening flight to Zurich and our 8:50 p.m. to London. You couldn't spend your day much more efficiently than that. And better cared for: by Swissair hospitality. The catch? You'll have to be an early bird (but not necessarily a night owl).

swissair world's most refreshing airline.

David Churchill on the deregulation of the European market and how one airline is making all the running in cossetting its passenger

An open sky and lower fares

Business travellers flying in Europe from next April could be in for a surprise. New European Union regulations come into force which will, for the first time, create a totally deregulated market for airlines based within the EU, plus Norway and Iceland.

The full implementation of the so-called Third Package of aviation liberalisation – which began in January 1993 – will from April allow European airlines to operate domestic flights anywhere within Europe. Since 1993, European carriers have had free access to all routes, apart from purely domestic services, thus eliminating the requirement that journeys should start or finish in the carrier's host nation.

Thus, for example, a French airline could offer a service between Madrid and Milan without the need to be routed via a French airport. From April, restrictions on foreign carriers operating purely domestic services in another member state will be abolished. The spectre of Lufthansa flying services between London and Manchester in competition with British Airways could, therefore, become a reality, although the German airline might be too worried about Air France attacking its Frankfurt to Berlin routes to bother about Manchester.

What impact will deregulation have? "Liberalisation will change the face of European business travel and the major players involved, among them corpora-

tions, travellers and travel management companies," Kyle Davis, head of American Express's European Air Fares Unit, says.

"Some of the biggest changes will be felt by the business traveller. It is likely that the individual traveller will have to get used to a culture of constant change. There may be a more convenient choice of schedules, but he or she will often be dealing with new or unfamiliar carriers. Add-ons, such as business lounges, may disappear as services become more basic, particularly at smaller airports.

As the US experience has shown, lower fares may also increase the total amount of air travel, leading to busier airports. And if the blurring that some foresee between schedule and charter does happen, then the business flyer may well find that he will have to accept the company of leisure travellers, too."

Mr Davis's comments may be ahead of the game as the indications are that Europe's airlines are not planning a major shake-up of their strategies post-April, especially to take each other on head-to-head in their home markets.

Moreover, American Express's own survey of changes since deregulation started in 1993, suggests that "passengers



New EU rules mean airlines can operate domestic flights anywhere within Europe

have not noticed a radical improvement in the choice of airlines on major routes."

The reasons, the Amex study suggests, have been partly to do with European recession and partly because of Europe's geography. Most of Europe's business travel takes place within the densely populated "golden circle" bounded by Amsterdam, Brussels, Frankfurt, Milan, Paris and London where there are fewer

secondary airports, compounding the problem of slot congestion at most major hubs.

The unavailability of slots elsewhere has made the large carriers reluctant to move away from their home airports from where they can at least exercise dominance over their home markets," the Amex report says.

British Airways has been most active in

developing a pan-European strategy to take account of deregulation with its acquisition of TAT, the French domestic airline, which it now owns 100 per cent, and with a stake of just under 50 per cent in Deutsche BA, the German domestic carrier. While both these airlines operate under BA livery and standards, from April BA will have the added advantage of being able to display its own code on computer reservation systems for both airlines.

But BA, like most of its European competitors, has found European flying an expensive business. "Our cost of providing a seat has risen faster than the price customers are prepared to pay in a highly competitive marketplace," Bob Ayling, chief executive of BA, says.

Hence the move towards low-cost operations via franchising. BA has put in place six franchise partnerships with regional carriers over the past three years, most of which operate under the BA Express brand. Air France also has a franchise as service between Southampton and Paris CDG operated by the small LK carrier Brit Air and branded as Air France Express.

These attempts to establish lower-cost operations have also come in response to

the growth of "no-frills" airlines. The concept, which originated in America, offers travellers a point-to-point flight across Europe without any of the add-on benefits such as free meals and drink although you can buy these on board bigger seats, and other services.

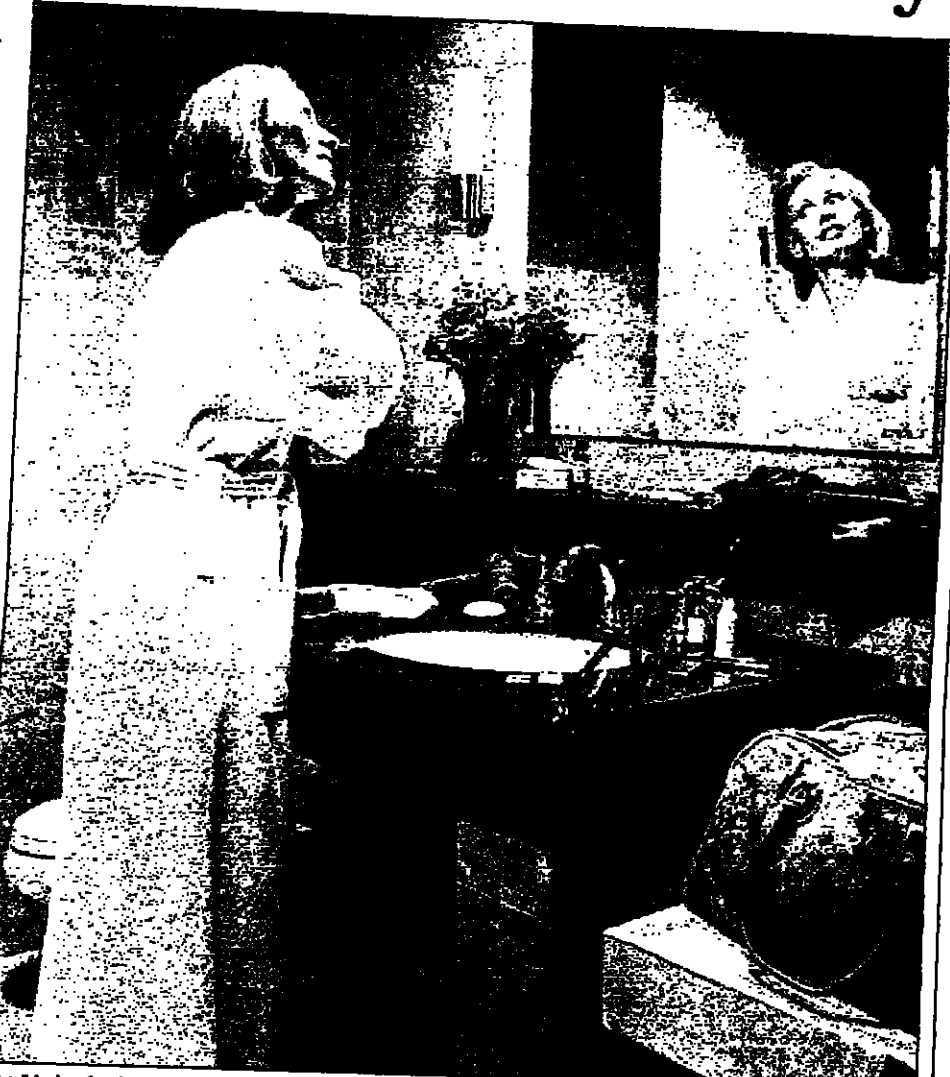
Fares can be 50 per cent or more lower than on scheduled carriers, although much depends on when and where you fly. Scheduled carriers base their more expensive fares on fewer restrictions which suit business travellers. No-frills airlines operate out of cheaper airports such as Luton, offer no on-board refreshments, and sell tickets directly without having to pay travel agents' commission, and other distribution costs.

But no-frills operators such as EasyJet surprisingly report that it has identified a significant proportion of business travellers among its holidaymakers, including some from large corporations as well as small to medium-sized businesses.

Such airlines may come and go, but the US experience is emulated in Europe, but there seems little doubt that the pace of change in Europe's skies is beginning to gather momentum. For business travellers, the issue is how far they are prepared to put up with less comfort in return for saving money. As one executive quoted in the Amex report wryly commented: "In two years' time there will still be two cabins or the London to Amsterdam service."

Strengthening the links between work and runway

Can the journey of 50 million passengers who use Heathrow each year be made easier?



At United Airlines' lounge, Heathrow, customers can take a shower and have breakfast

Richard Branson is claiming a new first in the airline world: a drive-through check-in service at Heathrow for business passengers on Virgin Atlantic.

David Churchill writes.

Mr Branson, chairman of the airline, says: "We expect to whisk up to 200 Upper Class passengers a day through this new limousine service – another world first for air travel."

Virgin's Upper Class passengers, who are already driven to the airport in a complimentary Range Rover, are taken to a special area at the Terminal 3 short-term car park where a check-in agent and baggage porter complete formalities. Once equipped with a boarding pass they are dropped off at the departures level and walk with hand baggage only through the Fast Track security and immigration channels and into Virgin's clubhouse lounge.

Virgin has consistently adopted a strategy of cossetting its business class passengers even before they get to the airport – it was the first airline to offer a free limousine transfer and also has motorbikes available for a faster journey through heavy traffic – and its new service will clearly take some of the hassle out of airport journeys and may be extended elsewhere.

Delays in getting to and through airports remain one of the biggest problems for business travellers. A survey by the magazine *Executive Travel* about the problems of travelling to London's airports suggested that, while in theory there are good connections, "the reality proves to be somewhat different, because of traffic jams and road rage on clogged motorways and system failures, industrial disputes and frayed nerves on the underground."

The airport authorities are aware of the problems and Heathrow access should be helped by the planned Paddington Express Rail-link due in 1998. But BAA is taking no

chances with plans for a temporary station close to the airport to enable a limited service, with access by shuttle bus, to be in operation before the main service opens. Total journey time from Paddington under this scheme would be just 25 minutes.

The airport authorities have several other plans under consideration for turning Heathrow into a major rail hub, although these are dependent on private finance. One of the plans under discussion involves a fast rail link between Heathrow and Gatwick, a move which would increase the popularity of Gatwick with business travellers.

Those business travellers who prefer travelling to the airport by car are being wooed by the development of valet parking services. Corporate clients of Hogg Robinson, for example, can have their car parked when arriving at the terminal, and need only to make a freephone call to have

it returned. Hogg Robinson charges £13.50 for one day and £31.50 for three days. Other valet parking operators charge just over £24 for one day and £45 for three, although the longer travellers stay away the cheaper the service becomes in comparison with long-stay car parking charges. Hogg, for example, charges a fixed rate of £67.50 for 11 days or more, much cheaper than using the long-stay car parks.

Once inside the airport, the Fast Track system continues to be well regarded by most business travellers offering a speedy transit through security and customs, with added benefits at duty free and bureaux de change, although there are some reports that congestion can be as bad during busy periods as the normal transit channels.

In particular, the Blue Track system used in some US airports is also causing concern: business travellers using

Miami airport, for example, have found the situation chaotic. They have particular difficulty finding the blue line to steer them through the Fast Track System. The newest lounge development at Heathrow is that of United Airlines. As with the British Airways and American Airlines arrival lounges, this offers 3,000 square feet of showers, individual valets, and personal baggage service to get luggage to hotels, breakfast and business facilities.

United has also just opened arrival lounges at Chicago and Miami airports. Mark Schwab, United's UK general manager, also points out that arrivals facilities for business travellers to freshen up are also available at many continental airports, including Frankfurt, Düsseldorf, Paris, Brussels and Amsterdam. "We think we have the most comprehensive and modern facilities for our arriving business passengers," he says.

Our wider seats are so spacious you'll hardly notice anyone next to you.



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An expense account too far

Independent advice could save companies more than £5 billion a year on travel costs, says David Churchill

Better handling of the way European companies process their business travel expenses could save 6 per cent of their annual business travel bill — equivalent to a financial saving of about £5.6 billion a year, according to a new survey.

The survey of 77 major European companies, carried out by Price Waterhouse, the consultant, on behalf of American Express found that most companies waste time and money attempting to reconcile the travel expenses of executives on the move. This reconciliation accounts for about three quarters of the "hidden" processing costs of business travel, apart from the actual cost of airline and hotel bookings.

The study shows that the business traveller spends considerable time collecting receipts, itemising expenses and calculating exchange rates.

Vahan Eminian, a senior Amex vice-president, says the survey shows that reducing "the previously hidden costs of business travel represents one of the most important opportunities companies have in the 1990s to deliver substantial savings on operating costs."

In the majority of the companies surveyed by the consultants, an average of 20 expense reports for overseas travel were submitted by executives each year. Price Waterhouse suggests that this could be reduced to 11 reports if an automated system were adopted.

Other ways of saving money include eliminating internal travel

departments and letting executives make their own bookings electronically.

The scope for savings on business travel is significant, as the generally accepted figure of spending by British companies on all their business travel expenses (including entertaining) is estimated to be more than £20 billion.

In the United States, according to the figures released by Amex last week, corporate business travel spending is forecast to reach a record high this year of \$156 billion (£100 billion) compared with \$150 billion in 1995.

Mr Eminian says: "With business travel and related expenses rated as the third largest controllable corporate expense after salaries and data processing, any well-managed company should be seeking to improve control over its travel spending."

But getting to grips with controlling costs does not mean simply putting pressure on the airlines and hotels for better deals, says Richard Lovell, managing director of Carlson Wagonlit Travel in the UK. "Such savings through tough negotiation with suppliers may be vastly outweighed by the implementation of a successful travel policy, focusing company travel spend on a few selected suppliers," he says.

Business travel agencies are helping companies to implement their



Vahan Eminian: delivers savings

policies — including consolidating all European or even global travel. The main agencies — Amex, Carlson and Hogg Robinson — are now moving away from their traditional role as agents taking a commission from the airlines, hotels and car-rental companies and are now working as consultants to their corporate clients.

This role has been partly forced on the agents by the airlines' move towards "capping" the commission the agents receive, thus reducing their income. But the agents also

recognise that as companies feel the need to control travel spending, so advice from an agency becomes not only useful but also necessary.

Mr Lovell says: "Companies are becoming more sophisticated about travel management. But with the delayering of management during the recession and since, they often do not have enough scope to manage their travel as effectively. This is something we can do better than they can, and this is being realised."

In return, the agents are switching to a management fee system, especially with larger clients. Such systems have several variations, mainly to do with ways of coping with the commission airlines and hotels still pay. One practice is for such commission to go straight to the company, which then pays a fee to the agent.

Large companies, however, are also now employing high-level specialist travel managers to help to manage their travel expenditure. Unilever, for example, has a corporate culture of letting its worldwide operations (it has more than 300,000 employees in 80 countries and sales of £32 billion a year) operate fairly autonomously within its overall framework.

But in 1994 it recruited an experienced travel industry executive, Derek Jewson, to oversee its travel spending, to manage it more effectively and reduce some of the estimat-

ed £350 million the company spends on business travel and related costs.

Mr Jewson, who had worked for travel companies including British Airways and Hogg Robinson, says the aim was "to put the same sort of management discipline over our travel spending as we do when launching something like a new brand of detergent".

His approach, however, has not been to impose any systems on the operating companies but to offer advice and examples to show them how they can get a better deal themselves.

All the 27 UK operating companies were asked a year ago to join a committee advising best buy on travel (Cabot). Much of what Cabot has tackled so far is simply "good housekeeping" and clarification of existing policies. One major issue, however, has been dealing with frequent flyer programmes.

Mr Jewson says: "Our approach has been to recognise that we operate in the real world and that these programmes exist. But while we do not stop people accepting them, we insist that they travel in the most cost-effective way for Unilever. If we find out, for example, that a traveller has plumped for a more expensive BA flight just to get Air Miles when there is a perfectly acceptable flight on another carrier, 20 per cent cheaper than BA, then we draw that individual's attention to the position."

This, adds Mr Jewson, is usually enough to end the matter.



Incentive trips include dog-sledding expeditions in Lapland

Fancy a spot of Arctic sledding?

An action trip abroad can be a big incentive to motivate successful staff

The good times are back in at least one part of the travel industry — the incentives market. Gung-ho motivation of sales staff by treating high-achievers to exotic overseas jollies was all the rage in the overheated, yuppie 1980s. Then recession struck and conspicuous hedonism at the company's expense became more difficult to justify to shareholders.

John Fisher, managing director of Page & Moy Marketing, says that his company's sales are up 25 per cent on last year. "In times of cost-cutting, you couldn't be seen to be doing it," he says, "but now that the feel-good factor is back, companies are beginning to appreciate the value of relationship building again. When money is not so tight, people start looking for that extra edge."

"In good times, cash incentives are regarded as cynical. It makes people feel as if they are economic units there to make money. Travel makes them feel as if they are valued as people."

The companies keenest to spend again on incentives are in the automotive industries, pharmaceuticals, information technology, financial services and telecommunications.

Sarah Webster, executive director of the Incentive Travel and Meetings Association, estimates that the UK industry is now worth £600 million, up from £500 million in 1994.

Len Altman, director at Maritz, says: "Nothing creates the same sort of desire as travel to an exotic location but it is not just that or the value of a trip. It is also that they are a symbol of success."

Such trips are usually hosted by the head of the sales team or the company for which they distribute, which means that participants can socialise with top executives.

Mike Whiteman, sales and marketing manager for Hogg Robinson's incentive travel division, says that the trips allow well-heeled people to do something as a group that even they could not afford or organise on their own.

Mr Whiteman says that incentives are no longer restricted to sales forces, traditionally the major beneficiaries of such largesse. "Strategically, companies are starting to take a more team-based approach and have noticed the potential of integrating areas such as accounts

and marketing on incentives," he says.

Destinations are also coming into line with economic realities. Graham Fraser, a Maritz director, says: "Until the late Eighties, clients were expanding their horizons by about 500 miles each year. The perception was that the further you went the better it got, and there were trips to countries such as China, Japan and New Zealand. For the next few years, during the recession, the word we heard more and more when choosing a destination was 'appropriate'. Budgets did not change but the perception had to be less glamorous."

Now, it seems, long-haul is back in favour, although at least half of incentive trips are believed to be short-haul, with Europe's most appealing cities — Paris, Barcelona, Vienna and Prague — among the top destinations. Ireland, with its reputation for the craic, is also gaining popularity.

In the search for novelty, some incentive organisers have even arranged trips to Finland, where the frigid entertainments include watching the Aurora Borealis, skidooring on motorised snow-bikes, reindeer and husky sledding, Arctic saunas and "lumberjack parties", which apparently involve chainsaws and copious vodka.

The United States remains the number one long-haul destination, although people now visit less familiar parts of America. Mr Fraser suggests Scottsdale (the fast-growing neighbour of Phoenix, Arizona), Santa Fe and Colorado. Ms Webster advises trips to New Orleans, Boston and Alaska.

Also proving very popular are southern Africa — although there is a shortage of hotels — and Australia. South America is tipped to grow in popularity.

When it comes to what customers want to do on their trips, the message seems to be that Britons do not mind a spot of white-water rafting or game tracking but they do like five-star luxury treatment at the end of the day. "It is still difficult to sell places like India and Burma," says Mr Fraser. "The French, and particularly the Germans, are prepared to go three-star if they will get an adventure."

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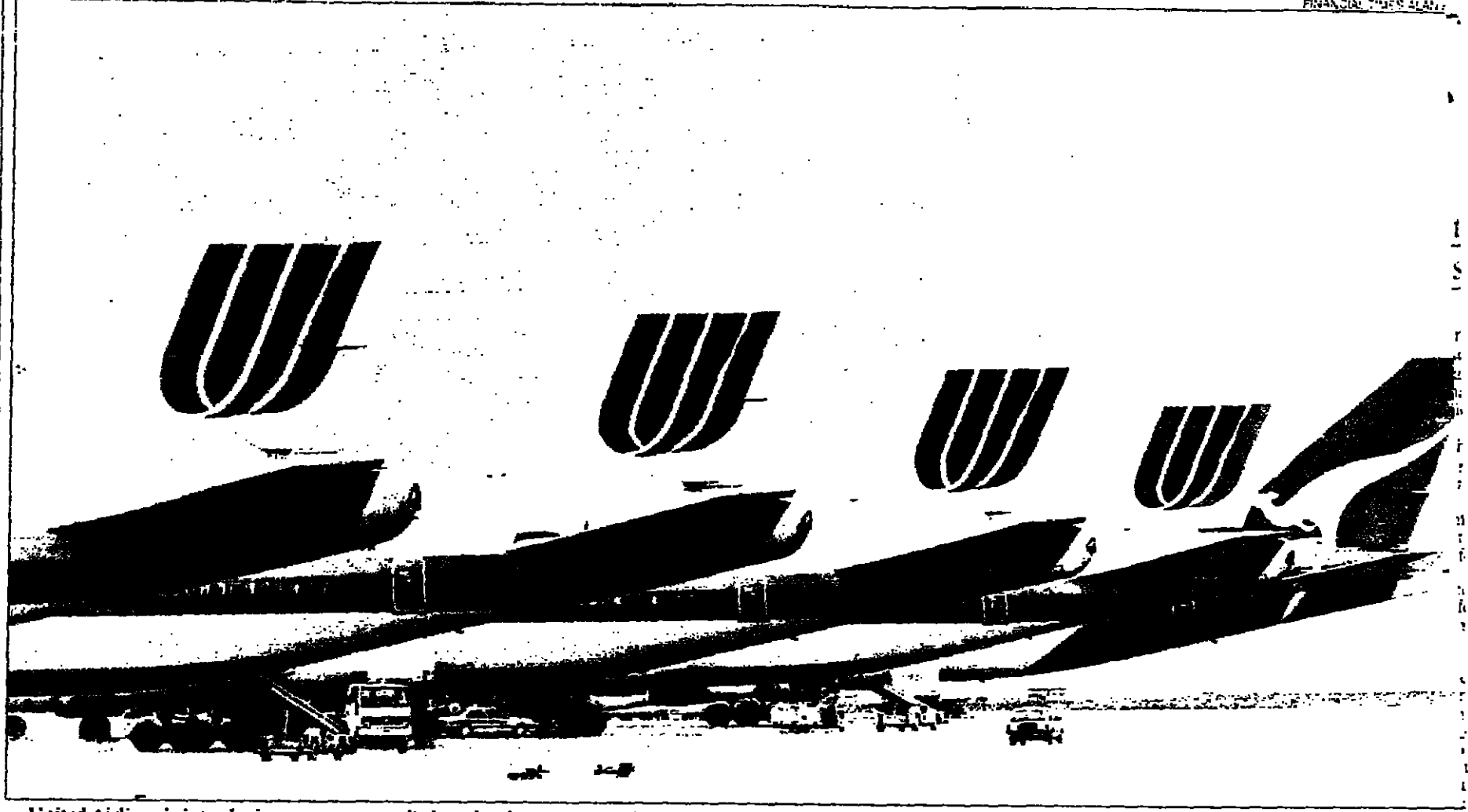
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A point in your favour

Frequent traveller loyalty schemes are a big hit, but the taxman is coming, says Catherine Chetwynd

You can almost earn loyalty bonuses on having your hair cut these days. Points for Air Miles are being awarded at restaurants and petrol stations, by airlines, and by credit-card, car-rental and hotel companies. But far from diluting the appeal, ready availability has turned loyalty credits into a second currency. Spouses are suing for points in divorce actions, claiming they are entitled to some split-off from the so-called luxury of business travel, and families even bicker over rights to the bonuses of deceased relations. But companies are beginning to question the advantages of loyalty schemes, as employees pursue not the company travel policy, but the most rewarding airline or hotel group. Research undertaken by MORI on behalf of Carlson Wagonlit, the business travel agent, shows that executives and travel managers admit Air Miles and frequent-flyer schemes could play an important role in affecting the choice of carrier. In addition, the travel agent's guide to frequent-flyer programmes shows that while one carrier provides most lucrative on route A, another turns up trumps on route B, putting paid to any hope of consistency if travellers are left to their own devices in the quest for more mileage points. Procter & Gamble led the way in ruling that points should be returned to the corporation, since they paid for the tickets. However, in the end, loss of morale exceeded cost savings, and the edict was rescinded. More than 50 Swedish companies, including Volvo, Electrolux and Saab are pressing SAS to redesign its Eurobonus scheme so that points are automatically returned to the firm. Electrolux hopes all the company's SAS credits worldwide will be placed in one account - an idea inspired by an arrangement between Norwegian company Kraemer and carrier Braathens Safe. Some airlines have corporate loyalty plans, rewarding both employer and employee. Lufthansa's Corporate Mileage Dividend Plan allows points to be credited to a company account. A monthly statement is sent to the designated contact and bonuses are given according to class travelled. And Virgin Freeway also operates a corporate account, rewarding both traveller and company, although the traveller comes off better. In Premi-



United Airlines is introducing a new seat on its long-haul routes which it claims is an improvement on the successful BA cradle-seat. Virgin is considering installing beds

Airlines make a new pitch for business

Carriers are finding new ways of sending you to sleep, says David Churchill

Little more than a year after it introduced an upgraded business class cabin along with its new Boeing 777 aircraft, United Airlines is now planning to install a new CradleSeat Class on its long-haul flights. The new seats will be introduced over the next 12 months but their design owes much to the so-called "cradle seats" that BA has installed in Club World cabins. This seat was ergonomically designed with the aim of enabling travellers to relax and sleep with the aid of electronically-controlled lumbar supports, better leg rests and "ear-flaps" on the headrest to provide better illumination when reading. BA's seat has tested well in flight comfort surveys this year, prompting United to emulate the design for its new seat. "But we are adding extra features that take the seat a stage further," claims a United spokesman. "While the BA seat is designed to enable people to sleep on their backs, our seat is designed for people to sleep on their sides, which research has shown is the most usual position." But United's new seat will still have a 49-inch seat pitch (basically the distance from one seat back to the next) while BA and American Airlines have both gone for a 50-inch pitch. American's new business-class seats being introduced this year also follow the BA cradle-seat pattern, with adjustable headrests with wings, a two-way lumbar support, and softer footrests. JAL has also just relunched its business class, with seats at a 50-inch pitch and including most of the features to be found in the BA design. United believes that a pitch of 49 or 50 inches makes little difference in actual seat comfort (although it gives its rivals a certain marketing edge), while Air France says its corporate passengers are happy with a 48-inch pitch. But given the similarities between business-class seats that most travelling executives can expect to experience over the next year, the airlines are trying to woo full-fare paying commercial travellers (and there are few official discounts on business fares on major carriers) by other means. American, for example, claims to be the only transatlantic carrier offering business-class passengers individual Sony Video Walkmans to watch their in-flight films, rather than videos attached to the seats. Food is also seen by the airlines as a key marketing weapon, especially now that they offer lighter menus and are more flexible in allowing what people can eat. BA's "raid the larder" concept, which allows business-class passengers to get their own snacks during a flight, has apparently been slow to take off on ex-Heathrow flights but proved popular on flights into the UK. American executives, it seems, are less self-conscious about changing their in-flight eating habits. But such factors as food, films and even in-flight telephones - while considered important in business class - are still probably not enough alone to determine the choice of airline. Most executives decide on their carrier, if they have a choice, on the schedule and flight times (direct or via a hub) as well as considering which frequent-flyer programme they are with. Hence the importance to the major airlines of establishing global networks. United already has code-sharing links with Lufthansa and other carriers while BA and American are still awaiting regulatory approval of their proposed alliance. Delta and Virgin Atlantic also have a limited alliance, offering Delta seats on Virgin's flights to and from Heathrow. But while the major carriers are able to forge alliances to win custom, the smaller international airlines have had to come up with added-value benefits to woo travellers away from bigger networks. Apart from usually offering a complimentary limousine service to and from the airport, the smaller carriers have eschewed first-class cabins in favour of an upgraded business-class product. This was first conceived by Richard Branson about 12 years ago when he introduced first-class seats at a business-class price. Virgin still has some of the bigger business seats around, with a seat pitch of about 55 to 60 inches, depending on the aircraft, and its business class (called Upper Class) service recently won an award from the readers of *Business Traveller* magazine. Surprisingly, for a company headed by Richard Branson, Virgin Atlantic is less high profile about business-class enhancements, preferring to tinker with the service rather than go for a major overhaul every two or three years (or more often) as its larger international rivals do. But it is looking at taking another quantum leap by introducing beds. Other airlines operating a combined business and first-class service, at least in the size of their seats, include Continental and Air Canada, both with 55-inch seat pitches. These services offer good value for those wanting larger seats at the same price as regular business class on other airlines, although with the move towards 50-inch pitch on both BA and American, the difference is being eroded. But the major carriers seem reluctant to move away from a first-class premium cabin, even though demand can fluctuate considerably. Flights to New York, Washington and Hong Kong, for example, generally have the strongest demand for first-class seats while less popular routes usually fill first class with business class upgrades. Estimates from commercial travel agencies suggest that the overall picture on first class (taking the less busy routes along with those heavily in demand) is that only a fifth to a quarter of first-class seats are fully paid for. Getting an upgrade for business to first, however, depends on whether or not the traveller as a CIP - a commercially important person. This class is often used as a marketing weapon to encourage loyalty (the ultimate is further upgrade to Concorde on the New York route) and also popular with executive flying US carriers who often allow frequent flyer points to qualify for an upgrade. BA more likely to promote a Gold level member (and possible Silver) of its Executive Club. But for those commercial travellers who merely drea of the premium cabins (business and first) because of the rigid travel policy of their companies, there is some hope of a more comfortable journey next year when BA carries out its long-awaited overhaul of economy. Speculation is that a better deal will be offered to full-fare paying economy passengers, along the lines of Virgin's Premier Economy.

Guests in the laptop of luxury

High-tech hotels now offer computer facilities, says Chris Lockwood



The traditional Lanesborough hides a high-tech system

While hotels have been quick to adopt computerised reservations and accounting systems they have been reluctant to apply technology at the sharp end - in guests' rooms. Those which have taken the high-tech plunge now offer fax facilities, dedicated telephone lines, video, CD players and even Internet links in many rooms, especially those on dedicated business floors. Linda Richards, director of Hotel System Supply Services Limited, which handles technology for about 1,000 hotels around the world, says: "There are some business travellers who just do not want advanced data and communication services in their rooms. They prefer to use the hotel as a refuge from the working day. Others do want such facilities but may not be familiar with the specific technology on offer. The third category is the highly computer-literate types who will invariably bring their own laptop computers with them." Many hotels now feature automatic check-out on televisions. The idea is that guests can review their bill at any time and confirm credit-card payment at the end of their stay by pressing buttons on the remote control. The intention is to avoid the frustration of the check-out queue on departure day. But while most guests use the review facility, they do not trust the technical payment procedure (often with good reason, judging by the numerous complaints about incorrect final billing) and end up queuing anyway just for a printed receipt. Television is likely to remain the focal point of in-room technology, and not just to show immaculate American blondes on CNN. In future, television will allow teleconferencing as well as interactive shopping, movie selection and hotel service, features already available. Keeping pace with technology is difficult for the industry and us. Johnny Thorsen, head of information technology at Hogg Robinson Business Travel International, says that there are "so many new advances coming out that companies are nervous about investing in one which may be outdated by the time it is installed. They are all trying to make money from new technology but it should only be deployed if it adds benefit or reduces costs." Mr Thorsen sees the next wave embracing the Internet and CD-Rom systems, as well as allowing guests access to hotel information and booking from home. "Home booking is widely available now," he says, "but it tends to be used by leisure travellers with some time to

browse before buying. Business customers continue to rely on travel departments or specialised travel agents in order to save time and money." London's Lanesborough Hotel, which opened in 1992, is an example of state-of-the-art technology, but its high-tech nature is largely concealed from guests and controlled by a personalised butler who also acts as the technical linchpin between guest needs and services. On each floor the screen in the butler's pantry shows which room is occupied or vacant, allowing him to direct housekeeping or engineering services without disturbing the guest. Room sensors enable the butler to follow guest movements, even to the point of showing if the bathroom light has been turned on in the middle of the night. The sensors also control air-conditioning and heating, which is turned down to conserve energy when the guest leaves the room. On arrival each customer gets personal business cards and stationery printed with a private telephone and fax number - two lines, a personal line plus a fax line, are provided in each room. Holiday Inn Worldwide has just completed testing in five hotels in Germany with multi-media television, including integrated computer software with CD player, games and Internet connections, as well as word processing, spreadsheet and fax facilities. The test also included a second telephone line with voice mail system, plus computer data ports.

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CITIES	Rates	From
AMSTERDAM	DFL	325*
ANTWERP	DEM	105*
ATHENS	DFL	700**
BALNECONELL	USD	21*
BANGKOK	USD	115*
BELGRADE	PTS	15.30*
BELLEVILLE	USD	120*
BELMONT	DEM	210*
BIRMINGHAM	SEK	490**
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	480**
BIRMINGHAM	USD	225*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	200*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	132*
BIRMINGHAM	USD	170*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	155*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	105*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	295*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	300*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	375*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	225*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	275*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	980*
BIRMINGHAM	USD	145*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	335*
BIRMINGHAM	ESC	33,000*
BIRMINGHAM	USD	115*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	165*
BIRMINGHAM	USD	6,100*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	540**
BIRMINGHAM	ESC	36,000*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	26,800*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	330*
BIRMINGHAM	USD	310*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	235*
BIRMINGHAM	CYP	63*
BIRMINGHAM	DEM	1700*
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BIRMINGHAM	USD	170*
BIRMINGHAM	USD	170*
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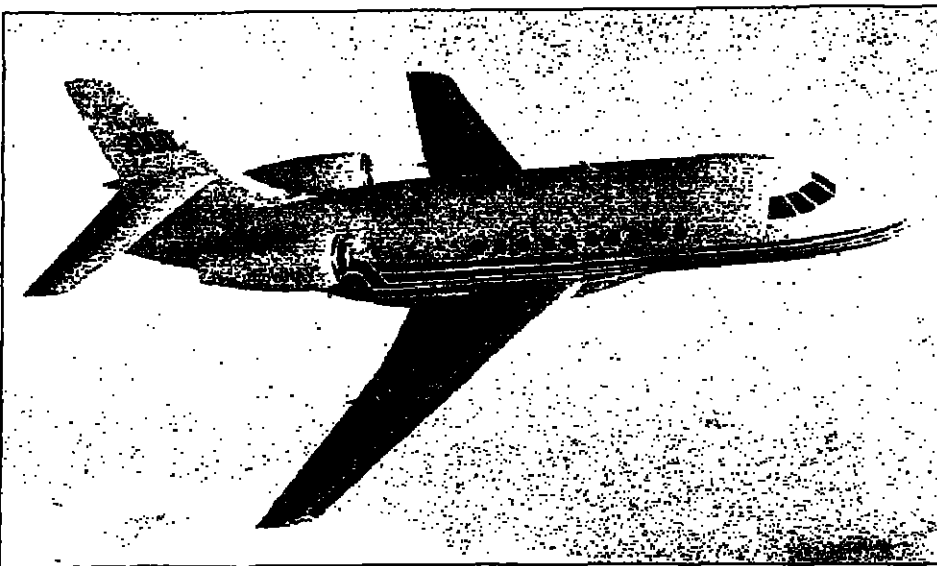
Rates are per room, per night, single or double occupancy. (In some locations, taxes and service charges are additional.) Rates do not include travel. They are payable in local currency, and valid until 31 December 1996. A limited number of rooms are available on this promotion, advance reservations are required, and option must be selected at time of reservation. If an option is not available at the time of check-in, a substitute will be offered. Offer void where prohibited by law. Not available with any other offer or discount.

Executive jets do it faster

Perilloried as a self-indulgence — particularly in the supposedly prudent — executive jets are all disparaged as toys he boys. This is not rising as they conjure up is of the chairman disapp on a junket for a day's g — but that is far from reality.

Large multinational organisations can justify owning a private jet — or even a fleet. For one-off trips, in many destinations have covered in a day, charter is more sense. There is the option of jet-sharing. Royal Dutch Shell, for example, keeps four jets at its headquarters in London. According to Brian Humphries, managing director of Shell Aircraft and chairman of the European Business Aviation Association, they are used for the worldwide transport of senior executives. The factors are flexibility, saving business opportunities, making possible a task that would not otherwise be done, and reaching parts of the world not served by scheduled services.

An example of a typical charter makes the point: a trip set off from Heathrow 7.30am, reaching White Plains, New York, at 8.30pm, a stop in Aberdeen. Business was completed in time to leave White Plains at 5pm the next day and the differences between the party arrived at 7pm in Wilmington, Delaware (there are no scheduled flights between these cities), where it spent the night. The next arrival was at 4.30am in Amsterdam, where people went to Shell's head office. The trip left for Heathrow an



Falcon 2000, the type of private jet chartered by senior executives for business trips

Work out the time wasted at airports, and chartering a plane starts to make sense, says Catherine Chetwynd

hour later. Mr Humphries conservatively estimates the company saved a day by using its own aircraft — and that is a day per executive.

Whether chartering for individual trips or using the company fleet, the outstanding advantage of private aircraft is flexibility. You can choose a departure time and turn up five minutes before: if you are held up, the aircraft waits. Extended check-in times, customs queues and the longer flying time on commercial aircraft make many itineraries impossible without one or two nights' accommodation. Add the cost of keeping captains of industry sitting at airports and the expense of overnight accommodation, and air taxis start to make

sense. Government departments have also recognised the strengths of executive jets; a joint report from the Departments of Transport and Trade last year concluded: "insufficient capacity for business aviation use in the South East will have a potentially adverse impact upon local economies and national competitiveness".

The private aircraft charter business in the UK is worth £100 million and, according to the broker Hunt and Palmer, there has been an increase in demand for flights to Switzerland, probably because of greater activity in the City. Jamie Martin, a director, says: "There has been a trend in recent years towards

greater use of chartered aircraft in the business sector, particularly in fast-moving industries such as banking, oil exploration and automotive manufacture. Newer and more economic executive aircraft allow staff to spend time working rather than travelling."

London Executive Aviation (LEA), based at London City airport and at Stapleford in Essex, flies three types of aircraft, seating from four to ten people. Kim Wylie, head of flight operations, says the company started in 1990 with one aircraft and now has ten. The last two were purchased in the past 12 months in response to a marked upturn in business.

"We come into our own

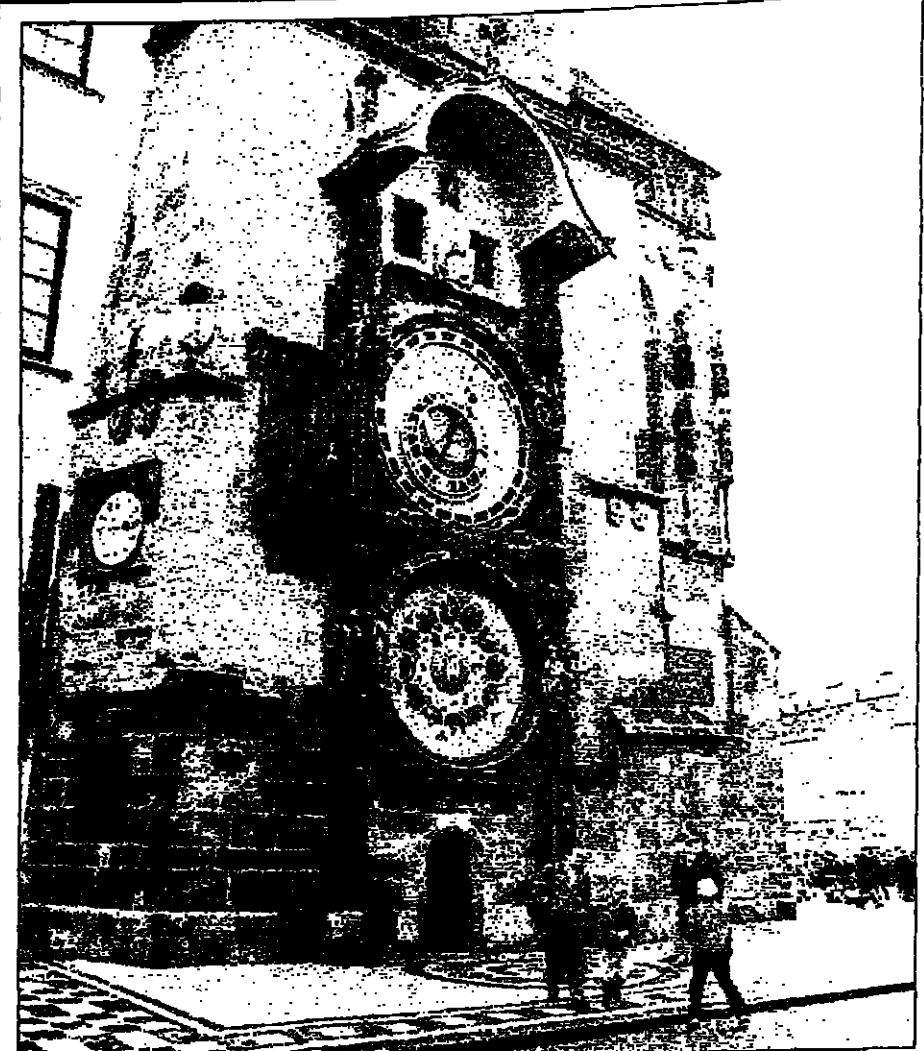
when people have to visit several places in one day," Mr Wylie says. LEA recently met a consultant from a 7.30am flight from Houston to Gatwick and transferred him to London City Airport, from where a car delivered him to the City. He and colleagues departed at noon for a meeting in Rotterdam. The meeting overran and the group did not leave Holland until 6pm, but the consultant still arrived at Gatwick at 9.30pm in time for his 10.30pm departure to Houston. The whole exercise cost £950.

Convenient local departure and arrival points are another strong argument. There may be 200 airports in Europe used by scheduled carriers, but 2,000 are available to executive aircraft.

Image apart, the biggest drawback to owning an executive jet is cost and efficiency. Not only is capital investment high, but dedicated aircraft are generally occupied for just 250 hours a year.

The London Jet Share Company may be the answer to this problem. LJS gives organisations the opportunity to own a half or a quarter of a Cessna Citation aircraft. In the event of all partners wanting to travel at once, aircraft will be made available. A quarter share will cost each partner £500,000 and this way, according to Mike Hamlin, managing director, you can make savings of 30 per cent.

LJS has just launched an agreement with American company Net Jets, which has offered the same service in the US for ten years. This will allow co-owners to use their flying entitlement here or in America.



The clock tower in Prague is becoming a familiar sight to British businessmen

Airlines boosted by Eastern trade surge

British exports to Eastern Europe were £1 billion eight years ago. Last year, the figure had quadrupled, resulting in a huge growth in demand for business travel to the region.

Four countries — Poland, Russia, the Czech Republic and Hungary — are among the UK's top 50 export markets. Lasting peace in the former Yugoslavia will mean another surge in trade.

The news that British Airways is to increase services to Eastern Europe next year reflects growing demand for improved access to the former communist-bloc countries.

In July, BA resumed flights to Belgrade, the capital of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with three flights a week. Now BA is to double the frequency to Belgrade for next summer, alongside increased departures to Bucharest, Kiev and Sofia.

British Midland, which already flies to Prague, is also targeting Budapest and Moscow as important routes. The hotel chains have responded, too: Prague, Budapest and Bucharest are bristling with international hotel names.

But the area is not cheap. In a poll of worldwide city hotel rates, Hogg Robinson rates Moscow second behind Tokyo, with average rates of £153.24. In a new booklet for clients, Hogg Robinson points out problems such as an import/export tax and the exorbitant price of telephone calls in Albania.

It is also normal practice for the price of car rental in Russia and the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, to include a chauffeur to prevent unwary or lost business travellers from being carjacked.

The pitfalls have not, of course, stopped people going. The number of UK travellers on scheduled airlines to the region grew from 1.29 million in 1994 to 1.54 million last year. Russia, the

Steve Keenan on the former communist nations with an appetite for air travel

Czech Republic and Hungary are the big attractions.

"Now that the countries are more open, people such as architects and lawyers are going," said Claudia Deutschmann of Fregata Travel, the London-based business travel agent. "But last month I also sent people to make animation films in Lithuania. Poland is also in heavy demand and business travel to Russia is still big."

Car rental in Russia includes a chauffeur to prevent carjacks

The Czech airline, CSA, started a service to Prague from Stansted this year in addition to operating out of Heathrow, while Lot, the Polish airline, increased flights to Warsaw this summer to 16 a week, three via Krakow in Poland.

New national airlines also operate direct from the UK, including Estonian Air, Riga Airlines, Ukraine International Airlines and Croatian Airlines.

All have non-stop flights, which are increasing in number. Estonian Air will have six flights a week from Gatwick to Tallinn this month, up from four a week.

The airline is an example of how the proximity of Scandinavia to the Baltic

states, and the consequent trade and cultural links, has encouraged investment in fledgling airlines. The Danish carrier, Maersk, has taken a 66 per cent interest in Estonian Air and will handle its ticketing and sales in the UK from next year. SAS is a 29 per cent shareholder in Air Baltic, one of two airlines in Latvia that serve Gatwick.

Bjarne Hansen, the president of Maersk, said: "We believe the opportunities for Estonian Air are considerable, both regionally and on a pan-European basis and we shall be seeking to exploit these fully."

Other carriers such as Lufthansa and Austrian Airlines are looking to maximise their links to Eastern Europe, and this makes good sense for many UK business travellers. They have the choice of flying out of Heathrow or Gatwick with their limited connections — or direct to cities such as Amsterdam, Copenhagen and Frankfurt with their superior networks.

SAS, for example, has 200 flights a week to the Baltic states and Copenhagen is now an important hub to the East. Swissair flies to 17 cities in Eastern Europe from Zurich and Geneva.

But the biggest airline to the Eastern Europe is Lufthansa, which last month launched a marketing campaign to promote its network of 366 weekly flights to 26 cities in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

The airline claimed 20 per cent of all traffic departing the UK to Eastern Europe last year and expects to carry 55,000 UK travellers east this year. Its main hub airports are Munich and Frankfurt and its busiest routes are Moscow, St Petersburg, Sofia, Zagreb and Prague.

As with hotel and car rental rates, the cost is not cheap. Fares from Western to Eastern Europe rose by 6 per cent in the first quarter of 1996, according to an American Express survey.

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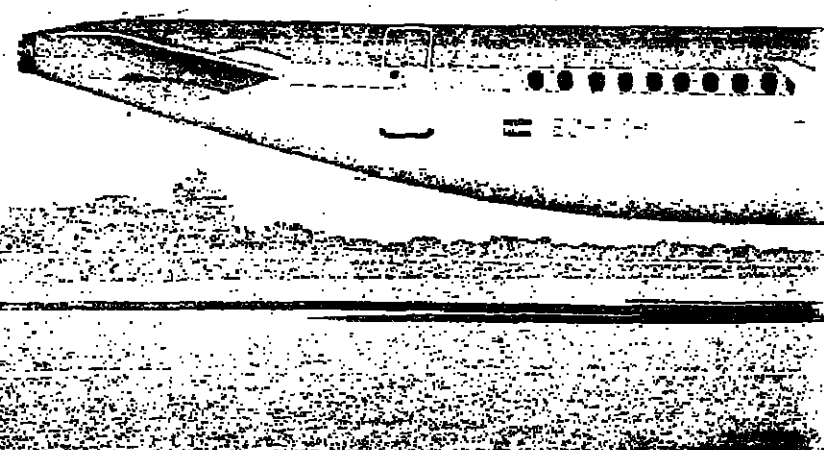
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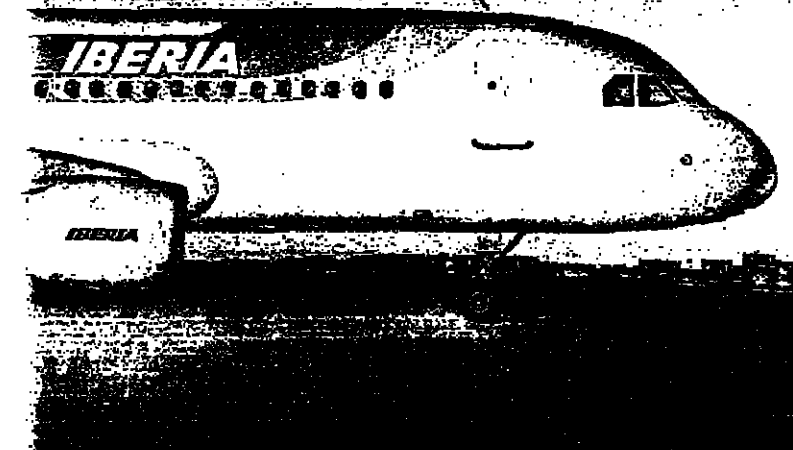
7.30am HEATHROW Iberia: First to Madrid



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هكذا من الأصل

هكذا من الأصل

Any business traveller's fear of flying could be well-founded, says Simon Coates



A patient being treated on a Lufthansa flight. Worldwide, about 1,000 people die on flights each year — most are men in their fifties

Dangers of the high life

Business travellers, the Zeitgeist of the Nineties, are required to fly ever more frequently around the globe to promote their wares. But they still need to arrive in peak condition. Are these two requirements irreconcilable?

On the face of it they might be. Farrel Kahn, medical author and director of the recently founded Aviation Health Institute, argues that the physiological hardships of flying can make it mortally uncomfortable.

"Worldwide, about 1,000 deaths occur on flights annually. And the number of post-flight deaths may be as much as four times higher," he says. "The principal victims are men in their fifties." Those men comprise the most numerous group among regular premium flyers.

Although these numbers are modest when compared with the more than one billion airline passengers each year, they show that for all the fancy innovations in seating or exotic additions to menus, that queasy feeling can remain the reality for long-haul flyers.

The Aviation Health Institute, which was set up to monitor the impact of flying on passengers, and receives support from a number of international companies with significant numbers of premium frequent flyers, is commissioning research aimed at improving passenger well-being.

In the longer term it aims to encourage manufacturers to exploit the potential of lighter materials to enable aircraft to fly at lower cabin altitudes and increase cabin oxygen levels.

But until that time, prudent executives can take some steps to try to avoid the sinking feeling as the aircraft lifts into the air.

Mr Kahn says: "Begin preparation four days before departure by drinking two glasses of carrot juice daily. This encourages oxygen saturation of the blood. Depletion of oxygen inevitably occurs in flight and if you have extra to start with you can be more alert."

"On the day of the flight itself, spend 15 minutes walking briskly before you proceed to the gate. Prolonged periods of immobility on board mean the blood drains to the feet. But exercise encourages blood circulation for the journey ahead. This is important because deep vein clots are becoming more common among all ages."

"Once on board, ensure that your leg-rest is in the horizontal position. That helps to boost circulation. And every hour either move around the aircraft or simulate the walking action in your seat."

Why should all this be necessary? After all the leading airlines invest many millions of pounds on the in-flight comfort of their most valuable customers; high seat-occupancy levels matter more there than in the less palatial confines of the main cabin; and, as the grounding of many senior executives during the Gulf War demonstrated, creature comforts for frequent flyers can, if unused, quickly become an airline's liability if they are not its principal earner.

But the body's reaction to physical realities on board cannot be obscured by any amount of personal attention. The humidity level in the cabin atmosphere, for example, can be a key factor.

Mr Kahn says: "The average room has relative humidity of between 40 per cent and 60 per cent, but a fully-laden aircraft will achieve only half that level and on flights with fewer passengers it can fall to as low as 2 per cent. To counteract the effects of this, enhance the moisture levels in the blood: sip still water or black tea, but avoid coffee."

Similarly, executives should resist the temptation to indulge in exotic fare, opting instead for light meals and non-alcoholic drinks. You may feel more relaxed with a dram, but the effect can be to neutralise the brain cells, making you feel particularly uncomfortable.

And rather than dosing up for a snifter-induced nap, business travellers would do better to wrap themselves in a blanket and exhaust themselves with the opening chapters of the latest management guru's bestseller.

"Travellers will soon find they are ready to close their eyes, don their eye masks, insert their wax earplugs, place a cushion in the small of the back to prevent direct pressure against the seat and rest their heads on a feather pillow they have brought from home," he says. "They can then set their seat in the maximum tilt position and look forward to some rest."

But what about the sneezing and coughing contagion from a few seats away? Many assume the recirculating cabin air means a lingering bug could ruin the whole trip.

In fact, as Boeing engineers point out, today's aircraft have "much better filtration, a much higher air-change rate and a much higher proportion of outside air". Still, eucalyptus oil applied to the nasal area should protect the traveller from germs and ensure that the Zeitgeist stays comfortably airborne.

Christopher Worman

for businessmen and women to switch off and relax. Business executives who continue to work when travelling may feel they are accomplishing something, yet the long-term effects from not switching off may be counter-productive.

Flying has the longest list of grievances. In addition to lack of information about delays, inexplicable queuing procedures and missing luggage, there is the fear of being late, non-smoking airlines' endlessly long airport corridors, claustrophobia and monotonous landing greetings. The most stressful factor of all, however, is other passengers (52 per cent), and one third are piqued by an absence of complimentary drinks.

How best to combat stress, then? These seasoned travellers listed sleeping, sex and alcohol. So it is not just work after all.

Christopher Worman

There is no escape for the businessman at Heathrow Airport. The executive club lounges provide most of the facilities needed for a quick piece of work while waiting for departure, but if they cannot provide everything, then the Business Centre, situated in the Queen's Building, certainly can.

The centre, part of the Thomas Cook Group, provides meeting and conference rooms offering the latest technology and services.

"We have considered every possible requirement for the busy executive travelling worldwide," a spokeswoman explains. "With this in mind,

such facility to be installed at an airport when it opened in May this year. Providing access to the World Wide Web, it offers a full range of Internet services, allowing surfers to review world markets, catch up on news, e-mail colleagues — or even relax with a game.

Jane Chadburn, centre manager, explains: "Having access to up-to-date information and being able to communicate through online technology is becoming increasingly important to people on the move. This initiative enables the 40,000 travellers who use the centre each year to make even more efficient use of their time."

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The centre, part of the Thomas Cook Group, provides meeting and conference rooms offering the latest technology and services.

"We have considered every possible requirement for the busy executive travelling worldwide," a spokeswoman explains. "With this in mind,

such facility to be installed at an airport when it opened in May this year. Providing access to the World Wide Web, it offers a full range of Internet services, allowing surfers to review world markets, catch up on news, e-mail colleagues — or even relax with a game.

Jane Chadburn, centre manager, explains: "Having access to up-to-date information and being able to communicate through online technology is becoming increasingly important to people on the move. This initiative enables the 40,000 travellers who use the centre each year to make even more efficient use of their time."

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Christopher Worman

This is your captain. Anyone for chess?

Air passengers are now spoilt for choice over inflight entertainment — if it works. Chris Lockwood reports

Entertainment in the early days of aviation was largely limited to chatting, reading or predictable games of "I spy" (something beginning with C — clouds).

Now passengers have the choice of more than 24 channels of films and news, destination information, interactive shopping, video games and airborne gambling.

Additionally, those once content to leave the working world behind for a few hours are now surrounded by telephone and fax reminders that they are still in global touch with business on the ground.

Having revolutionised both engine control and flight deck systems, new technology has declared the passenger seat the next high ground.

The World Airline Entertainment Association estimates that more than \$1 billion will be spent by airlines this year on in-flight entertainment and passenger communication. This follows \$1.5 billion spent in the past 18 months. Even more investment is anticipated for 1997 as carriers battle for passenger loyalty with increasingly sophisticated in-seat systems designed to amuse, entertain and enable them to work in the air.

By 2005 a total of 2.4 billion passengers is expected aloft each year, and those with access to new electronic entertainment and information systems will increase from today's 23 per cent to as much as 60 per cent of the total. This could mean up to 120 million people per month consuming these new media in the sky.

Already more than 20 aircraft are flying with the latest interactive systems on board which, in addition to standard entertainment, offer the chance to play games such as chess, backgammon or Nintendo, and the ability to make car hire, hotel or onward airline bookings, pay for extra films, follow live news or sports events, track the global stock markets, hook up a laptop computer, or view the sky through external cameras.

The existing system, available in all three classes, offers 22 video and ten audio channels plus a selection of ten Nintendo games.

Handsets in each seat activate individual bin screens. Turn the remote control over and a telephone unit is available with a credit card swipe facility allowing passengers to call anywhere in the world from their seat via satellite.

The enormous investment by airlines is justified by the promise of revenue generated by pay-per-view, shopping, gambling and telephone charges. Yet that promise is hamstrung by a human reality — the appetite for such systems and the use of in-flight business equipment are in decline.

Duncan Hillary, chief executive of Spafax Airline Network, which supplies software and revenue-generating systems to nearly 50 airlines (including Singapore, Cathay,

market share can mean much as \$50 million a year airline revenue," he said. "A competing passenger layer with top cabin entertainment facilities is one way of achieving that."

He warns, however, that there are many problems along the way before airlines get the right mix of content, power and reliability.

GEC/Marconi recently pulled out of the market, for example, having pledged to supply both BA and United with interactive systems for their Boeing 777s. The system have failed to live up to expectations.

Failure of much-promoted systems is one of the major problems surrounding the technological advance. Even Singapore Airlines admits a failure rate on four to six seats per flight — not a bad ratio, of 400, perhaps, unless the seat is yours.

Industry experts agree that

Singapore Airlines is spending \$3.5 million per aircraft

BA, Emirates and Air Canada, explains that passengers on long-haul flights are the captive audience the airlines want, but also a passive one.

For the first two hours or so travellers may be extremely active — working, watching, telephoning and accessing the systems," he says. "But after a while they become extremely passive — the opposite of what the airlines require for interactive technology which can make money."

Passengers become as passive as possible — they go to sleep — so all this technology is sitting there unused.

Mr Hillary believes there is a huge future for such systems, but only if the airlines consider it as a passenger service first aimed at the broader goal of increasing market share overall, rather than the short-term goal of making money per passenger per flight.

"A 1 per cent increase in

of all the technology in use on an aircraft, the in-flight entertainment system is probably the most important because it is the one the passenger can see.

Alastair Cumming, BA chief operating officer, says avionics systems which are used to control, navigate or communicate for operational reasons are duplicated and triplicated and failure will often go unnoticed. But seat controls give an instant bad impression if they fail, whether it is the cabin crew call button or the on-line link to the Dow Jones Index.

Another problem affecting these new systems is passenger acceptance. Technology is changing so rapidly that a new airline entertainment system can be out of date as soon as it is installed. Passengers are lagging far behind and often do not understand — or do not wish to — the benefits available on the screen in front of them.

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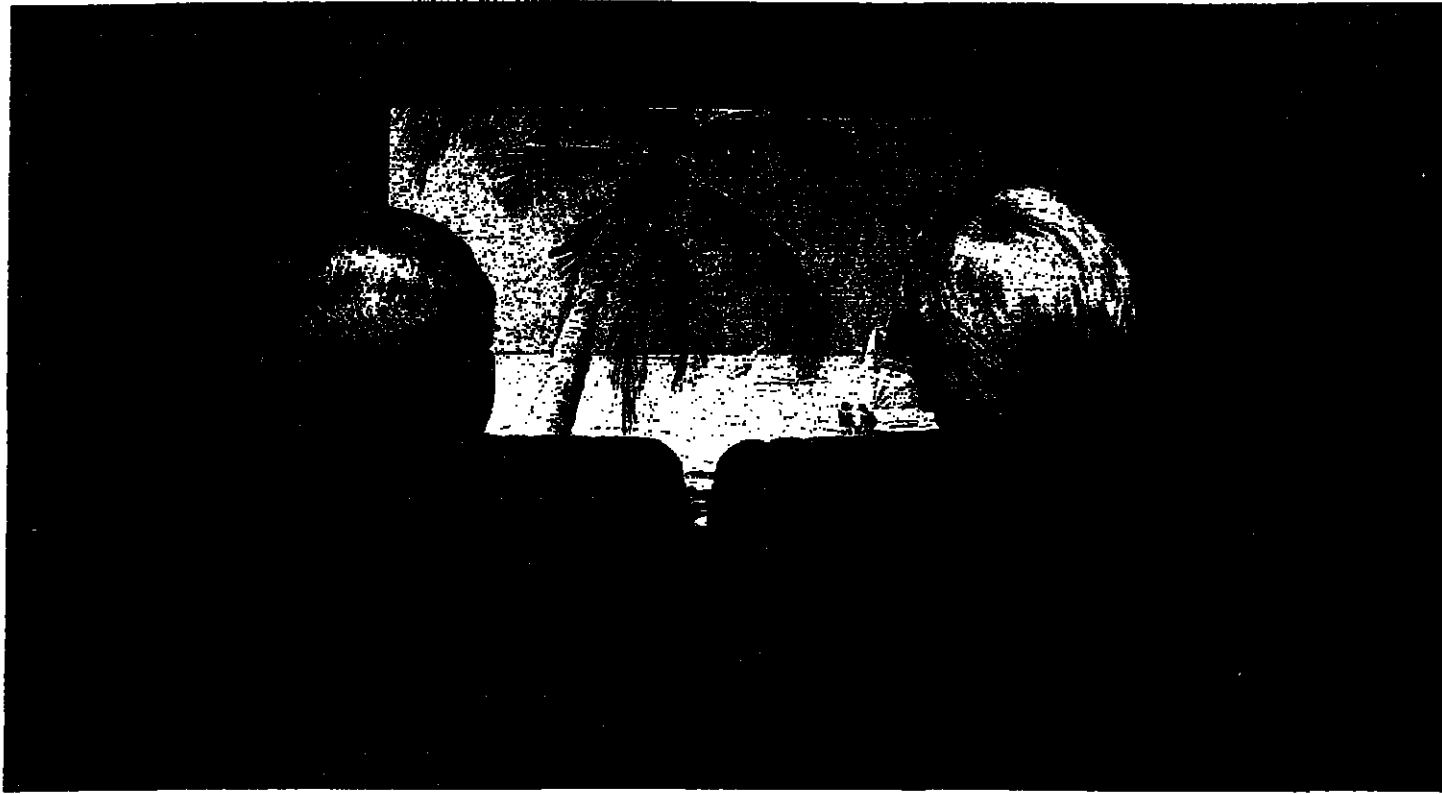
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هكذا من الأصل

The gentle approach to policing pensions

John Hayes, head of the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority, on the new Pensions Act

What do Arthur Scargill and the Bishop of Oxford have in common? The answer is in the contribution they have made to the law of trusts, which still underpins occupational pensions, at least in England and Wales.

Both argued unsuccessfully before the courts that political or moral considerations could override trustees' duties to obtain the best financial return for their beneficiaries, whether miners or clergymen.

The Pensions Act 1995 is a direct result of Robert Maxwell's abuse of pension funds. (Ironically the Church Commissioners lost more from property speculation.) And trustees are at the heart of the protection of occupational pensions.

At a time when the Government is resisting the movement from Europe for compulsory works councils, it has introduced new domestic law requiring occupational pension schemes to be run nevertheless by trustees, a third of whom must be chosen by the workers. There is an opt-out procedure that can be initiated only by the existing trustees or the employer. In this case the workers still have the last word.

The same legislation produces another relative novelty in our law. It creates a statutory duty on some professional advisers to report to the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority (Opra) when they have reasonable cause to believe that the relevant law is being broken or that a breach of trust has been committed, if the breach is likely to be of material significance to Opra.

This is new territory for actuaries. Auditors have had similar duties under the Banking Act but it is understood that they are rarely used. Failure to do so could lead to disqualification from the right to practise.

Such draconian powers may be regarded as hardly conducive to harmo-

nious relations between advisers and their clients, all struggling to comply with what are basically administrative or financial requirements.

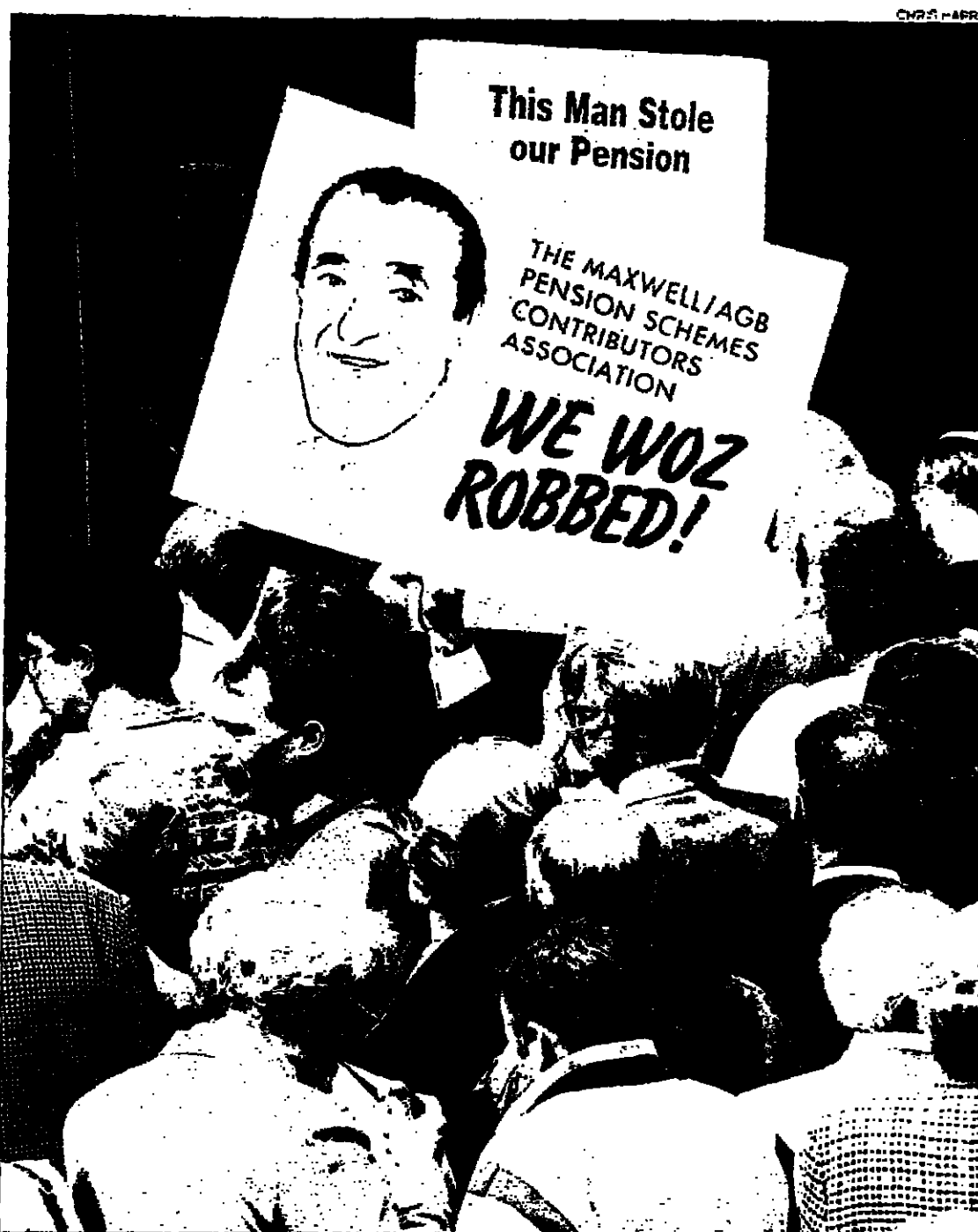
Opra is planning to inject a spirit of openness in which breaches are not treated as an automatic passport to the imposition of financial penalties or other sanctions. Instead, for minor breaches, Opra will be followed up, that things have been put right.

Unlike most other regulators and enforcement agencies, Opra is given the power to investigate, prosecute and sentence those who breach its rules. The courts will retain the right to quash Opra's decisions on the grounds that it has exceeded its powers or failed to follow the rules of natural justice. Opra will be able to sue in civil courts throughout the United Kingdom to recover pension assets wrongly appropriated.

The Pensions Act creates some offences enforceable by Opra. Opra will have review procedures to enable those aggrieved by its initial decisions to appeal. It will not be bound to grant oral hearings in all cases.

Fairness, expedition and a sense of proportion will all have to be shown if Parliament is not to feel that too much power has been conferred on a single agency. Though Opra is an independent legal entity, much of its affairs are controlled by the Secretary of State for Social Security, even though the bill for its operations, like that of the pensions ombudsman and the new Pensions Compensation Board, will be picked up by employers or pension schemes.

Whether Opra is successful will depend on the sensitivity and competence which it displays. Who knows what disasters are likely when it begins its operational role on April 6, 1997? Good intelligence as well as a certain amount of luck will be essential.



Pensioners who lost money through Robert Maxwell's abuse of their pension funds lobby Parliament

Leaders in pensions

LAW FIRMS are facing a huge upheaval as a result of the Pensions Act. Most of the provisions come into force next April but already firms are reporting a big rise in work. Frances Gibb writes.

All the top ten corporate firms have strong departments but according to Chambers & Partners Directory, Linklaters & Paines and Lovell White Durrant are just ahead. They are closely followed by niche firms Sacker & Partners (boosted by the recent addition of what was Nicholson Graham &

Jones pensions' team); Nabarro: Rowe & Maw; Freshfields; and Travers Smith Braithwaite. Others who are highly regarded include Aslop Wilkinson.

At the Bar, the leading set is said to be Wilberforce Chambers, headed by Edward Nugee QC. Nicholas Warren QC was described as "head and shoulders" above the rest: Robert Ham QC, and Paul Newman are also highly rated. Others include Michael Hart QC, of 5 Stone Buildings and Nigel Inglis-Jones QC, at 35 Essex Street.

Firms brace for industry upheaval

Edward Fennell on the massive changes due with the new Act

Nobody pretends that the pensions business is glamorous or exciting. But as this year's Labour Party conference showed, it is moving up the national agenda. So it is no surprise that this week's annual conference of the Association of Pensions Lawyers in Leeds will be attended by hundreds of keen solicitors. As Ken Dierden, a partner at Freshfields and the chairman of the association, puts it: "It is now acceptable to admit at dinner parties that one is a pensions lawyer."

An indication of the importance of pension law is the expansion of the association. From a few score members a decade ago, it has grown to 500, and this week's deliberations are expected to be of a high standard. As one speaker comments: "You could make or break your reputation at this event. You are presenting your ideas to an audience of your peers, who are intensively critical. To put in a weak show or make a mistake could be disastrous for one's career."

The backdrop to the conference is the Pensions Act 1995, which comes into force next year. The changes being effected are huge and the association can claim to have had a key role in shaping many of its most important provisions. Taken individually, the pensions industry accepts the good sense of most of these developments. When viewed altogether, though, the effect is to create the need for huge change. As Robert West, of Baker & McKenzie, points out: "There is feeling in the industry that the regulations are too detailed. Some people

consider that the impact of them will be overwhelming."

The background to the Act, of course, is the skulduggery to which pension funds have been subjected. Well-publicised cases of pensions mis-selling and the abuse of funds have led to tighter regulations, and trustees are being forced to seek detailed advice from lawyers to cope with the changes. One point that trustees will need to review in the next few months is who gives them their legal advice — a move that could lead to a reshuffling of clients.

Stuart James, of Rowe & Maw and the doyen of the pensions scene, expects both to lose some clients and to gain new ones. "It will," he says, "be like musical chairs, as trustees feel under some obligation to make changes. I think that all the leading pensions firms, such as ourselves and Slaughter & May, Freshfields and Sacker & Co, are likely to be affected."

Many of the largest law firms have strong pensions departments as an annex to their normal corporate work. Smaller firms draw in clients specifically because of their pensions expertise. It is anyone's guess at this stage which will do better out of next year's possible shake-out.

Also shaping the Pensions Act are social trends that may affect everyone. A divorced wife will be entitled to a share of her former husband's pension and there is a shift away from occupational pension schemes as fewer employees stay with the same organisation all their working lives and many become self-employed.

To put in a weak showing could be disastrous

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Businesses in the North East have many of Britain's specialist lawyers right on their doorstep, Edward Fennell reports

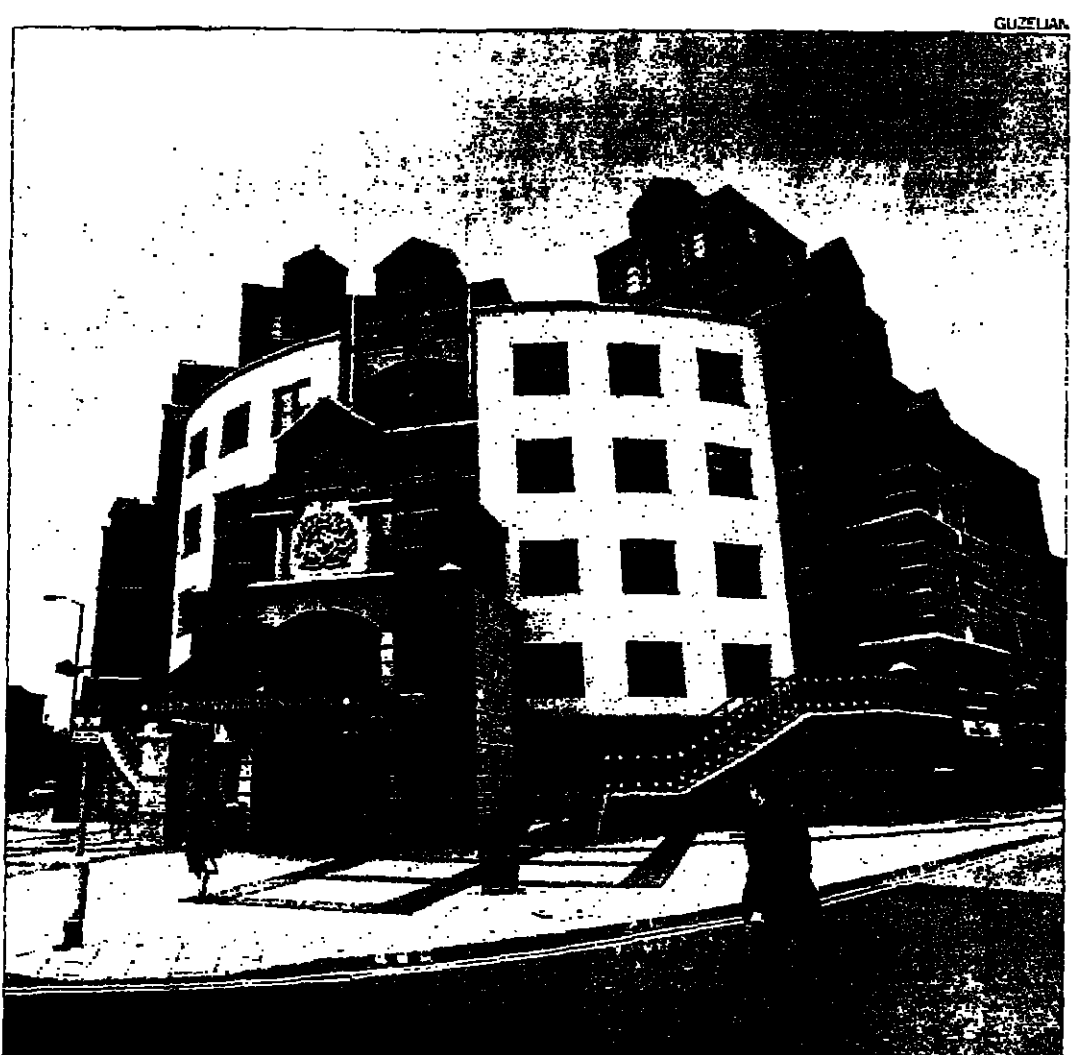
Shining northern lights

Businesses in the North East are spoilt for choice when it comes to selecting commercial lawyers. It is not just that there are high quality lawyers — almost every region can claim that these days. More important is the fact that there are three legal centres — in Sheffield, Leeds and Newcastle — and there are firms which can claim to be national leaders in specialist fields. Selecting a single market leader is impossible, especially when Leeds has spawned both Dobb Lupton Alsop and Hammond Sudards, two of the most dynamic firms in Britain. But if you are looking for a firm which is distinctive special, then the prize might be awarded to the Sheffield-based Irwin Mitchell. Under the leadership of Michael Napier, it achieved a remarkable reputation as disaster lawyers *par excellence* and, with Howard Culley as managing partner, that reputation is being sustained. The firm has achieved notable success in multi-plaintiff work in connection with asbestosis and is also the recognised leader in cases of Croutfield-Jacob disease. Moreover, the firm has the services of Kevin Robinson, a master of business crime. When Alan Clark blew the whistle in the "arms to Iraq" trial, it was largely as a result of research by Mr Robinson. In addition to this exceptional

track record in high-profile cases, Irwin Mitchell is also bubbling along in mainstream areas such as property, mergers and acquisitions, commercial litigation and private client work. As Mr Culley says: "We are very buoyant in every department — you can't single out any area which is doing better than the rest." Irwin Mitchell was rather later in the field than its Yorkshire rivals to expand geographically, but it is moving now. As well as offices in London and Birmingham, it has a strong presence in Leeds — and that is really taking war into the enemy's camp. Leeds prides itself on being Britain's second business centre after London. Certainly, its law firms have been exceptionally strong, with Booth & Co. alongside Dobb and Hammonds as a very home-grown operation. The local offices of Eversheds and Pinsent Curtis are also highly regarded. What makes Booth & Co. different is that it has persisted in its independence, although it is a member of the Norton Rose M5 group. It is the future of that group which is now exercising the mind of Mark Jones, the managing partner of the firm. "You either have to keep

on developing, or you decline," he says. "In Norton Rose M5, we must now decide where we are going next. It has either to evolve or decline — I hope it evolves." Eversheds' local offices, both in Leeds and further north, are demonstrations of how successful a "national" firm can be. Its landmark project is the work it is undertaking for the International Centre for Life, a £54 million initiative being funded by the National Lottery to provide a remarkable tourism and educational focus for Tyneside. The centre will supply a "gene dome, body and mind" facility, as well as a bio science village and it represents the resurgence of the Tyne as a centre for innovation. Smaller in scale but also significant is work that Eversheds has been doing in the area of private finance initiative (PFI). This is a speciality in which the firm nationally takes pride, and its work with Tynemouth College, which has "Pathfinder" status, and the backing of the Further Education Funding Council illustrates how PFI is starting to produce positive results. Eversheds also acts for the Tyne & Wear Development Corporation and has snapped up a number of

transactions which, in the past, might have gone down to London. Perhaps in the most tantalising position is Dickinson Dees. As the largest firm of solicitors in Newcastle, it enjoys a certain distinction. However, Newcastle does not have the commercial muscle to compare with Leeds or Manchester and its remoteness means that there are few pies it could draw on as natural clients. However, John Flynn, the business development partner, enjoys the fact that the firm has now gained a national reputation, especially in the field of transport. Britain's second and third largest bus companies are among its clients. It is also doing work for Siemens and Samsung in connection with their inward investment in the area. Many of the existing smaller family-run Tyneside companies, meanwhile, go to Robert Muckle for their legal advice. Tough and grumpy as solicitors, Hugh Welch, the firm's commercial partner, says: "I suspect that we are viewed with suspicion, distrust and even dislike by some of the firms on Tyneside, but we believe in giving clients what they want and for us it has produced results. With increased profits of 170 per cent between 1991 and 1995, we must be doing something right."



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هكذا من الأصل

Court of Appeal

Accountants protected as officers

Mutual Reinsurance Co Ltd v Peat Marwick Mitchell & Co and Another

Before Lord Justice Leggatt, Lord Justice Hobhouse and Lord Justice Thorpe

Judgment October 11

A firm of accountants, appointed as auditors of a company incorporated in Bermuda pursuant to that jurisdiction's Companies Act 1981 and the company's bylaws, were officers of the company for the purposes of which they were appointed, and were therefore entitled to protection under those bylaws to preclude a claim by the company against them alleging negligent auditing.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment allowing the appeal of the defendants, Peat Marwick Mitchell & Co and KPMG Peat Marwick, against the judgment of Mr Justice Tuckey on June 21, 1996, when he found in favour of the plaintiffs, Mutual Reinsurance Co Ltd, a company incorporated in Bermuda, on its claim for damages against the defendants for negligent auditing.

making a claim against the defendants, their statutory auditors, alleging they were negligent in failing to detect that certain of the plaintiffs were a result of fraud, retained by certain Luxembourg and German companies.

Mr Peat Marwick, QC and Mr Richard Harker for the defendants, Mr Richard Adams, QC and Mr Lloyd Tamin for the plaintiffs appeared.

LORD JUSTICE HOBHOUSE said that the question was one of the construction of a provision in a company's bylaws. Any construction of a bylaw had to be construed having regard to the surrounding circumstances and the legal and factual context.

The Bermuda Companies Act 1981 was largely derived from the corresponding English legislation and the decision of the Bermuda court would be inclined to follow and apply established English law.

Since the London and General Bank (1994) 2 Ch 195, [1994] 1 WLR 174, there was a line of authority in England that auditors could be

officers of a company and would be if they had been appointed as such.

The Court of Appeal there rejected the argument an officer had to be a person concerned with the company's management or had at least some measure of control over the company's affairs.

Further, in *Re Kingston Cotton Mill Co (No 2)* [1894] 1 Ch 131, [1894] 1 Ch 131, 627, *Re Shuter* [1900] 2 QB 252, 250, Part XI, Chapter V of the Companies Act 1985 of England, sections 300, 377 of that Act, and Part II of the Companies Act 1989 of England.

Having considered the relevant provisions of the Bermuda Companies Act 1981, his Lordship said that it was clear that the Bermuda Act adopted the same approach to auditors in the material respects as did the English legislation.

Auditors might or might not be officers of the company, if they were appointed under section 89 of the Bermuda Act they would be officers, but if employed to carry out an audit without being so

appointed they would not be officers.

Both sections 88 and 281 of the Bermuda Act were drafted taking into account such distinction. Although sections 88 and its heading, "Provisions as to liability of officers and auditors", read in isolation might justify a different inference, when the other provisions of the Act and the general legal context were taken into account, the inference could be seen to be unsound.

By s 123, under the heading "Indemnity" provided "... every director, officer of the company and member of a committee constituted under bylaw 90 shall be indemnified out of the funds of the company against all civil liabilities incurred or suffered by him as such director, officer or committee member and the indemnity shall extend to any person acting as a director, officer or committee member ... provided always that the indemnity shall not extend to any matter which would render it void pursuant to the Companies Act."

The phrase "every director, officer of the company and member of a committee constituted under bylaw 90" was repeated in the following bylaws.

The plaintiff contended, inter alia, that the bylaws should be read consistently and bylaw 123 was drafted so as to refer to earlier bylaws, such as bylaw 90 which provided indemnity for the officers of the company and which did not refer to auditors, nor, on an ordinary reading, did it extend to them.

However, bylaw 118, providing for the appointment of auditors, provided "... the auditors shall be appointed and their duties regulated in accordance with the Companies Act ... and such requirements not inconsistent with the Companies Act ..."

That bylaw had to be read with the statutory provisions to which it referred. Consequently if the auditors were appointed under section 89 of the Act, they were appointed as officers of the company, and bylaw 118 implicitly confirmed that.

Thus, notwithstanding bylaw 90, the bylaws did contemplate and provide for auditors to be appointed in accordance with section 89 as officers of the company.

There was no dispute the defendants were appointed under section 89, so that they were to be regarded as officers of the company for the purposes of which they were appointed, and were entitled to the protection of bylaw 123.

Lord Justice Leggatt and Lord Justice Thorpe agreed.

Solicitors: Stephenson Harwood; Freshfields.

Kumari v Jalal

Before Lord Justice Neill, Lord Justice Ward and Lord Justice Thorpe

Judgment 25 July

A person who had been committed to prison for contempt of court for breach of an order to do a specific act by a specific date could not be committed again under the same order. If the failure to obey the order continued it was necessary to go back in court to obtain a further order.

The Court of Appeal so stated allowing an appeal by Faris Jalal from the order of Judge Harold Wilson sitting in Oxford County Court on July 23, 1996 committing him to a second term of imprisonment for contempt of court for his continuing failure to comply with an order for the delivery up of property to Bunka Kumari within seven days.

Following the divorce of the parties in 1992 Mrs Kumari applied for an order for the delivery up of certain specified items to her of certain property. An order was made by a district judge that certain specified items be returned to Mrs Kumari within seven days.

When Mr Jalal failed to comply with the order he was committed to prison for three months by Judge Harold Wilson, QC, on Mrs Kumari's application. Mr Jalal took no further action to return the specified items when he was released from prison and Mrs Kumari applied to have him committed again on the ground that he had still failed to comply with the order. Judge Harold Wilson sentenced Mr Jalal to a further six months.

Mr Piers Presdee for Mr Jalal:

Mr Curran: Gill for Mrs Kumari.

LORD JUSTICE NEILL said that the present case demonstrated the care which had to be taken before orders for contempt for contempt of court were made. There were technical rules laid down.

An order for committal involved the liberty of the subject. It was therefore important that before the order was made, the court should scrutinise with great care not only the facts but the procedure.

The main ground of appeal was that the order made by the district judge was for the return of the goods by a specific date that Mr Jalal had failed to comply with the order, and, having failed to comply, that breach was a single breach which was now over.

He served a term of three months imprisonment following the order of Judge Wilson-Miller. But in respect of that breach he could not be sentenced again. Therefore the judge was wrong in sentencing him again for the same offence.

Where there was a dispute about property, a court would decide the question of title and could make an order for delivery up of the property. Under the Rules of the Supreme Court it was common not to make an order specifying a time for delivery up, see Order 42, rule 3(2).

But it was intended that the order was to be enforced by an order for committal, then it was plain from Order 45 rule 8(1) which was substantially the same as Order 29, rule 1(1) of the County Court Rules that it was necessary that the order for delivery must set out a date for compliance.

The allocation of resources was a function ordinarily performed on an annual but continuing basis, according to a number of competing priorities, one of which would be the provision of help to a local education authority under section 166.

Under that section a health authority was required to have regard to the local resources available, which it was likely to do when setting its annual budget. It could not reasonably be expected to reallocate and reallocate resources according to a particular demand arising at a particular moment.

The provisions of section 166 did not render it outwith the power of the district health authority to seek to ration its scarce resources.

Repeat committals not possible

Council duty not delegable

Regina v Harrow London Borough Council, Ex parte M

The obligation on a local education authority under section 168 of the Education Act 1981 to arrange for special education provision, made for a child was not delegable.

Mr Justice Turner so stated in the Queen's Bench Division on October 5 when allowing an application by M, by her mother and next friend, for judicial review of Harrow's failure to comply with her statement of special educational needs.

The authority argued that it was relieved of the necessity of complying with the statement because of a failure by the health authority to provide the requisite resources.

HIS LORDSHIP said that the duty of a local education authority

in respect of a child for whom special education provision was made was set out in section 168 of the 1981 Act.

It was owed personally to the child and it was not by that section delegable. It was the duty of the authority itself to arrange that the provision was made.

Under powers conferred as in section 166 of the 1981 Act, the authority requested help and such was provided, to that extent alone, the authority was making the arrangement required by the statement. But if that help was not forthcoming for any reason, section 168 provided no let-out for the authority.

In clear terms the obligation upon an authority under section 168(5) was simply expressed and subject to no qualification, whether express or implied.

Touchless assault

Regina v Sargeant

There was no need for there to be indecent touching, or the threat of such touching, for an act to constitute the offence of indecent assault.

The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division (Lord Justice Hutchison, Mr Justice Douglas Brown and Mr Justice Cusack) so held on August 19, when dismissing an appeal against conviction by Anthony David Sargeant on February 29, 1996 at Preston Crown Court (Judge Andrew, QC and a jury) of the offence of indecent

assault contrary to section 1(1) of the Sexual Offences Act 1956.

LORD JUSTICE HUTCHISON said that the appellant's principal ground of appeal was that for there to be an indecent assault in law there had to be indecent touching, or at least the threat of indecent touching, and that in this instance there was no such touching or threat of touching.

The prosecution's case was that the appellant had compelled the complainant, a boy aged 16, to commit an indecent act in a public place.

Blanket order unsatisfactory

Burgess v Stratton

Before Lord Justice Waite and Lord Justice Otton

Judgment October 3

Given the general scheme of Order 17, rule 11 of the County Court Rules, a blanket order extending time for compliance with the automatic directions was unsatisfactory.

The Court of Appeal so stated, refusing an application by a plaintiff, Peter Burgess, for leave to appeal from an order of Mr Assistant Recorder Pownall, QC, sitting in Kingston upon Thames County Court.

Mr Stewart Room for the plaintiff, the defendant, Mr James Stratton, did not appear and was not represented.

LORD JUSTICE WAITE said that the issue for the judge was the interpretation to be placed on the district judge's directions, made at a time when the plaintiff's action was on the brink of suffering an automatic striking out under Order 17, rule 11(9) of the County Court Rules, that "the automatic directions be extended for a period of three months from today".

The judge ruled that the order could not, having regard to the circumstances in which it was made, be construed literally so as to start time running afresh for all purposes.

He interpreted it as a direction that the guideline date was

postponed for a further three months to allow the plaintiff an opportunity of making a further date request within that period.

The plaintiff had delayed that request until some two weeks after the expiry of the three-month extension, and the judge accordingly held that the action had become automatically struck out.

A generalised direction of the kind which the district judge had made was, so counsel had told their Lordships, in common use at the time and remained so. No criticism should therefore be made of the district judge for adopting it.

Nevertheless, given the general scheme of Order 17, rule 11, which was to direct different time limits for differing stages in the litigation, a blanket order extending time for compliance with or the operation of the directions as a whole, was unsatisfactory. It was potentially ambiguous and liable to arouse controversy as to whether its effect was intended to be general or limited to specific steps in the litigation.

It would be better if such directions ceased to be used because they ran the risk of conflicting with the guiding principles, stated in *Downer and Downer v Brough* [1996] 1 WLR 373, that directions varying, supplementing or superseding the automatic directions ought to be expressed in clear and specific terms.

The question for their Lordships

was whether it was arguable, especially in the light of the inherent ambiguity of such a direction, that the judge was wrong to continue to be capable of only one meaning in the context in which it was made.

The Lordship agreed with the judge that common sense required the present direction to be given a restricted interpretation.

It was of course the court's duty to grant leave to appeal if the contrary was arguable, but it was not.

LORD JUSTICE OTTON, agreeing, said that the case illustrated that judges who made directions which had the effect of displacing, wholly or in part, the automatic directions regime should make it as clear as possible which, if any, parts of Order 17, rule 11 were intended to remain in effect.

The district judge's order could have been more felicitously expressed, but there was no doubt that the effect of the order was merely to extend by three months the time for lodging a hearing date request within the automatic directions regime.

Practitioners would find it helpful to refer to the commentary in the County Court Practice 1996 (at p 281) under the subheading "automatic striking out".

Solicitors: Coleman Tilley Tarrant Sutton, Kingston upon Thames.

Resources rationed

Regina v Brent and Harrow Health Authority, Ex parte Harrow London Borough Council

A district health authority was not prevented by section 166 of the Education Act 1981 from rationing resources available to meet a request for help in education provision for a child with special needs.

Mr Justice Turner so stated in the Queen's Bench Division on October 8 when dismissing an application for judicial review of Brent and Harrow Health Authority's refusal to meet a request by Harrow London Borough Council to provide therapy for a child with special needs.

HIS LORDSHIP said that under section 166 of the 1981 Act a district health authority was obliged to help in the provision of special educational needs unless, under subsection (2), "having re-

gard to the resources available to them, for the purpose of the exercise of their function under the National Health Service Act 1977, it is not reasonable for them to comply."

The allocation of resources was a function ordinarily performed on an annual but continuing basis, according to a number of competing priorities, one of which would be the provision of help to a local education authority under section 166.

Under that section a health authority was required to have regard to the local resources available, which it was likely to do when setting its annual budget. It could not reasonably be expected to reallocate and reallocate resources according to a particular demand arising at a particular moment.

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TRANSACTIONING IN ART: THE LEGAL PITFALLS

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All these questions will be considered at a seminar to be held by the Institute of Art and Law, in association with the Art Newspaper, on the afternoon of Tuesday October 29th at the British Museum.

For further details contact the Institute of Art and Law at 47 Francis Street, Leicester, LE2 2BE. Tel/Fax: 0116 244 8870.

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Owners have new chance to make Derby challenge

son, on the latest occasion taking the Irish Champion Stakes. John Oxo, her trainer, said: "She's been working well and deserves to take her chance, although it's going to be tough against Halling and Bosra Sham."

First Island has been switched to Saturday's race after Geoff Wragg had a change of heart about running the colt in the Breeders' Cup Mile. "Rather than send him to Toronto and Hong Kong, which means two long trips, we've decided to run him in the Champion Stakes and then in the International Cup in Hong Kong, which is five weeks away," Wragg said.

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Quinn, again wearing the Salman colours, was seen at his strongest on Windsor Castle, who led in the dying strides to beat *Atlantic Desire* by a head in the Hedgehog Conditions Stakes. The winner was never on the bridle at any stage. "He needs a longer distance and we will probably put him away now until next year, as he is a very immature horse," Salman said. Quinn has now ridden 145 winners this year, but remains 30 behind Pat Eddery, who rode *Vanishing Trick* to win the finale.

Money means more than glory to Europe's finest

When sport begins counting the takings ahead of the glory, we have problems. When money means more than the integrity of the competition, who can doubt that sport itself is devalued and that the disease will spread to the minds of the players?

With Manchester United now settling as best they can on the banks of the Bosphorus, it is European Champions' League time again — except that very soon it will be champions, runners-up, maybe even third-place qualifiers in the competition that used to be the best versus the best, and is soon to sacrifice this for invited big leaguers, while the real winners of smaller nations can go and play elsewhere.

When Uefa, the European governing body, passed through Turkey just over a week ago, it confirmed at Ankara that from next season there will be 34 instead

of 16 clubs in the Champions' League, and that in the event of Manchester United winning the FA Cup next May, England would start in July with three participants. This column's objections to the dilution of the essence of the competition — how ludicrous it is to continue to call it a Champions' League — has been set out before. But now, it gets worse: if Manchester United finish third in the FA Carling Premiership and say Liverpool were champions and Newcastle United runners-up, all three would be in the money next season.

And it is, make no mistake, a money league. Did you read last week Manchester United's valuation of their own club at around £400 million? Do you follow Italian football closely enough to know that Silvio Berlusconi, the former prime minister, is not only the owner of AC Milan but also of the commercial television stations

helping to push Europe towards the rich elite. He intends to follow United's lead and to float his club on the Bourse, the Italian equivalent to the London stock exchange.

Dealing with American and British bankers to put a valuation on Milan's assets, Signor Berlusconi makes it plain that if, as happened to Gucci last year, the club is blocked from its own Bourse listing, then he would go ahead. His own estimation is that Milan is worth 400 billion lire (£167 million). This, perhaps surprisingly, rates Milan junior to Manchester United, but only in stocks and shares. Berlusconi paid 20 billion lire (£8.3 million) to Franco Baresi, George Weah and company for winning Italy's Serie A championship this summer.

Strange, but the players now seem sated. They lost 3-0 against AS Roma in Rome last Saturday, carelessly conceding two goals in 20 minutes, and doing nothing in

ROB HUGHES



Overseas Football

reply until a third goal hit them before the final whistle.

Juventus, the European Cup holders, went to Vicenza and outplayed them but lost 2-1

because they showed nothing like the concentration in defence that had blotted out Manchester United last month.

And round Europe the matches before the Champions' League had a familiar tale. In Spain, Atlético Madrid, who have scored four goals in each of their two Champions' League appearances so far, again took their eyes off the home league ball and were held 2-2 by Real Betis, thus losing further ground to Barcelona.

Raddy Antic, the former Luton Town player who had survived a full year as coach under the dreaded club president, Jesus Gil, will not be worried as long as his Argentine forwards, Diego Simeone and Juan Emsaider, score goals where it counts, and the Serb, Milinko Pantic, does his inspirational stuff from midfield. For Gil has spoken: he wants a place at the presidents' table, and he means the high table of Europe.

These Latins, and the Germans too, often contend that they cannot win everything. The fixture lists, the clubs who ignore medical warnings of overuse to get their money's worth out of bloated contracts, are suppressing the essence of play. We cannot stop the world, or even Europe's corner of it, and jump off back into the days when European Cup nights were a light, exciting, added flavour, like the rich sauce to a good meal.

Uefa knows what we know, that the extended and gradually exclusive Champions' League is a misnomer; it also knows that if it did not in effect abdicate to the demands of Berlusconi, Manchester United and the self-appointed giants, they would eventually form a league of their own, abandoning the home grounds, and leaving the rest to play for comparative peanuts among themselves.

Business, business, business. If

you are exasperated, if you would rather read at least one paragraph about a sportsman, try Tijani Babangida. He is 22, he once played for Arsenal, Tottenham, then Niger Tornadoes. Tomorrow, all being well, he will play at Rangers, for he is the new right winger of Ajax. That club, having been forced by the Bosnian ruling to lose world class players, and in an injury epidemic that numbers five of their team, have a bewitching winger in Babangida.

Those who saw him at the summer Olympics saw dancing feet, an almost untutored throwback to the days when a winger had one purpose and one entertaining aim. He has since tormenting Paolo Maldini, and leaves all the talk of money, and of lost principles behind. Although one wishes Rangers no further embarrassments in Europe, how nice it is to see something as yet untainted by lucre.

Newcastle worried by threat of racism

FROM DAVID MADDOCK IN BUDAPEST

FRADI. It means the People's Team, and is the nickname of Ferencváros, Hungary's most successful football club. The problem is, the people of former Eastern bloc countries still have not quite worked out who they are, and they sometimes cling to reactionary politics as a way of bringing order to the breakdown around them.

The motto of the Budapest club is Strength, Understanding, Morality, but Ferencváros have attracted a violent right wing following, with little morality, who cite nationalistic hatred in the name of the people.

It can be ugly to witness. Ajax were on the receiving end of it last season, when their black players were abused and threatened in a European Champions' League tie to such an extent that the Hungarian supporters were banned from

before, many times, and nowadays it just spurs me on. Sometimes you do feel like reacting, but the best reaction is to score goals — there's no answer to that."

Ferdinand has strong thoughts on the issue of racism. He believes the problem has not gone away in England, even though it has been reduced, in the FA Carling Premiership at least.

Ferdinand took part in a high-profile advertising campaign with Eric Cantona, of Manchester United, to highlight the dangers inherent in such an ugly attitude. "It is not football's problem, it is society's," he said.

"The problem is how people are brought up. It is so hard to change people's attitudes if they are raised to think black is no good. I don't think it will ever go away. It has calmed down a bit in the Premiership, but it's still there as strong as ever at the smaller clubs where there is not the resources to dedicate to stamping it out, and I'm sure we will get it in Europe as well."

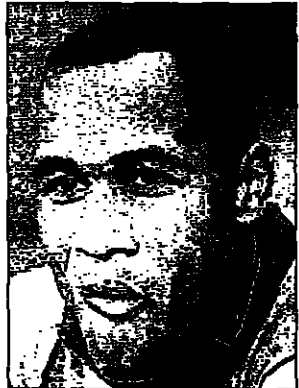
In this case, it is no idle threat to Ferdinand. The Ferencváros supporters are capable of a hatred that most of us cannot even imagine — and purely because of the colour of his skin.

Kevin Keegan, the Newcastle manager, has stressed to his players the size of the task awaiting them in Budapest. As a player with Liverpool, he lost to Hungary's top club and, for once, he has urged caution to his cavalier side, who will welcome back Faustino Asprilla, after his circuitous journey on the way back to England from international duty with Colombia.

Keegan though, must not be too wary of a workmanlike Hungarian side, which possesses little of the sparkle of some of the great teams of the past.

Ferencváros have produced such luminaries as Sándor Kocsis and Zoltan Czibor from the legendary Hungarian team of the Fifties, and more recently Florian Albert and Nyalisi Zoltan Varga, their new coach, believes that the golden days of the past, when such players were common, are long gone.

"People believe Hungarian football has fallen asleep and just needs a kiss to wake it up. But I am not a prince," he said.



Ferdinand: strong views

the return game in Holland. There has been violence too, the club receiving a fine of £53,000 after trouble this season when Olympiakos, of Greece, travelled to Budapest. It is into this volatile atmosphere that Newcastle United venture today, with some trepidation. Their black players have been warned of the problems they could face, and they know from all too real experience that it may not be pleasant.

Les Ferdinand, the England centre forward, has encountered such odious racism in Britain and he, therefore, holds little hope for anything other than a repeat performance in Hungary.

"If this club has right-wing fans then you have to expect the worst, and the players could be like that as well," he said. "But I've experienced it



Benito Carbone, who joined Sheffield Wednesday from Internazionale for £3 million yesterday. Report, page 52

Robson and Souness fined for outbursts

BRYAN ROBSON and Graeme Souness, the managers of Middlesbrough and Southampton respectively, have been found guilty of misconduct charges and fined by the Football Association.

Robson has been fined £1,500 and warned about his future conduct after remarks made to Michael Riley, the referee, following the match with Nottingham Forest at the City Ground on August 24. He has also been ordered to

give a written undertaking not to become similarly involved in the future.

Souness has been fined £750 and warned about his future conduct as a result of remarks made to Riley after the Leicester City versus Southampton match at Filbert Street three days earlier. Steve Double, the FA spokesman, said: "This is a good time to point out that we are asking managers to observe a 30-minute cooling period after

the final whistle before approaching match officials."

Ian Wright, the Arsenal forward, has been charged with misconduct by the FA over remarks allegedly made about David Pleat, the Sheffield Wednesday manager. Marco Gabbiadini, 28, the unsettled Derby County forward, has joined Birmingham City on a month's loan with a view to a permanent move to St Andrew's. Alan Mullery, 54, has been

appointed as the new director of football at Barnet. The former Fulham and Tottenham Hotspur midfielder player left the game in 1987 after spells as manager of Brighton and Hove Albion, Charlton Athletic, Crystal Palace and Queens Park Rangers.

The Professional Footballers' Association will announce the result of its ballot this weekend on possible strike action by Nationwide League players.

High-flying Dodds ready to spread European wings

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

IT HAS taken ten years for Billy Dodds to gain recognition as a striker of some repute but he is reveling in his new-found status. When Aberdeen take on Bromley IF, of Denmark, at Pinodrie tonight, in a Uefa Cup second-round, first-leg tie, he is keen to demonstrate that his arrival on the European and international stage is much more than just a passing phase.

Dodds, 27, is the leading marksman in Britain, his two goals in Aberdeen's 3-0 win over Dunfermline on Saturday, in the Bell's Scottish League premier division, taking his tally to 16 this season.

He also took part in Scotland's ultimately ill-fated World Cup trip to the Baltic states last week, which ended with the farcical non-match against Estonia in Tallinn.

Having made his Scotland bow four days earlier, when he came on as a substitute in the 2-0 win against Latvia in Riga, he was looking forward to making his full debut. He performed the kick-off ritual, by passing the ball to John Collins, but the game was then abandoned because of Estonia's controversial absence.

"I can at least say I've started for Scotland, even after what followed," Dodds, a former Chelsea apprentice, said yesterday. "Everything has

snowballed for me recently and I just hope it continues."

Having scored twice on Saturday, Dodds was taken off on a stretcher after a clash of heads with Andy Todd, the Dunfermline defender. "I felt OK when I sat up but then looked around and saw about 40 players," he said. "I think I was a wee bit concussed but I'm all right now. It'll take a lot more than that for me to miss the game."

Dodds will need a clear head, and another goal or two, if Aberdeen are to make any progress this evening. They have stumbled through the previous rounds, with unconvincing victories against Zalgiris Vilnius, of Lithuania,

and Barry Town, from the Konika League of Wales, and despite Dodds's prowess up front, they possess a disturbingly frail defence.

"We never go into a game to shut up shop. It's not our nature," Tommy Craig, the Aberdeen coach, said. "To do that would be totally against our strengths. Anyway, our attack is always our first line of defence. That shouldn't be forgotten."

Bromley, the Danish champions, were beaten in the qualifying round of the European Cup Champions' League by Widzew Lodz, of Poland. They then overcame Aarau, of Switzerland, having been awarded the consolation of a

place in the Uefa Cup, and are confident of an extended run in the competition.

"It is not just about this tie," John Jensen, the former Arsenal midfielder player, said. "We know we can win it and then perhaps go all the way to the final." If they do, it is unlikely to be on the back of Jensen's marksmanship. He earned a cult following at Highbury after taking 98 matches to score his first, and only, goal for the north London club.

ABERDEEN (from left): Billy Dodds, 27, Scotland; John Jensen, 27, Denmark; Tommy Craig, 34, Scotland; Billy Dodds, 27, Scotland; John Jensen, 27, Denmark; Tommy Craig, 34, Scotland; Billy Dodds, 27, Scotland; John Jensen, 27, Denmark; Tommy Craig, 34, Scotland.



Jensen: confident

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL SON AFTER FIVE-MATCH BAN GIVES STRUGGLING COWBOYS A BOOST

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

MICHAEL IRVIN, who was suspended and put on probation after being caught by police in a hotel in possession of cocaine, marijuana and two topless dancers, returned to what he does best on Sunday — catching footballs for Dallas Cowboys, the Super Bowl champions.

The wide receiver, who served a five-match ban for violating the National Football League's (NFL) drug-abuse regulations, caught five passes for 51 yards as the Cowboys, who lost three of their first four games in Irvin's absence, continued their revival with a 17-3 victory over Arizona Cardinals. "I would be lying if I said I wasn't worried about the crowd

response," Irvin said, "but it was a warm welcome home and I appreciate that."

His colleagues were equally glad to see Irvin return. Emmitt Smith, the Dallas running back, who scored two touchdowns — the first the hundredth of his career — said: "The morale was great with Mike back. It was good to see him in the locker room. He brings a lot to the team."

Barry Switzer, the Dallas head coach, said: "I don't know if the swagger is back, but we got a great football player back. It really helps."

Dallas, though, can only hope that Washington Redskins do not run away with the National Football Conference eastern division title. The Redskins secured their fifth successive victory, a 27-22

defeat of New England Patriots, thanks to the accuracy of Gus Frerotte, who threw for 280 yards and two third-quarter touchdowns, and the handling skills of Henry Ellard. He caught two passes to set up Scott Brunton for a 24-yard field goal inside the last minute, after a two-yard touchdown run by Curtis Martin, their running back, had pulled New England to within two points at 24-22 down.

The Redskins are one of five teams with a 5-1 record. The others are Indianapolis Colts, Denver Broncos, Green Bay Packers and Pittsburgh Steelers, who secured their fifth successive win by beating Cincinnati Bengals.

Minnesota Vikings, who had a chance to take their

record to 6-1, instead suffered an unlikely defeat at the hands of Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Trent Diller passed for 218 yards and three touchdowns as the Buccaneers won 24-13 — their first victory of the season. Nick Lowery became the most prolific kicker of field goals in NFL history with a fourth-quarter attempt from 21 yards — the 374th of his career. Lowery's celebrations, though, were muted as his team, New York Jets, slumped to their seventh straight defeat. The Jets led 14-3 in Jacksonville before losing 21-17 to the Jaguars. Mark Brunell throwing the two decisive touchdowns passes.

Atlanta Falcons are also looking for their first win after losing at home to Houston, giving them a 0-6 record.

RESULTS AND TABLES

RESULTS: Atlanta 13 Houston 21			
Buffalo 7 Miami 21	Carolina 48 St Louis 13	Dallas 17 Arizona 3	Jacksonville 21
New York Jets 17 New Orleans 27	Chicago 24 New England 22	Washington 27 Pittsburgh 20	Cincinnati 10
Tampa Bay 20 Minnesota 13	San Francisco 10 Philadelphia 19	Cleveland 37 Detroit 21	Indianapolis 20
Dallas 17 Arizona 3			
National Conference			
Eastern division			
W	L	PF	PA
Washington	5	155	78
Dallas	4	126	124
Carolina	1	114	161
Atlanta	0	55	148
Jacksonville	0	69	116
Central division			
W	L	PF	PA
San Francisco	4	136	62
San Diego	3	144	84
Denver	1	114	161
Seattle	0	69	171
Western division			
W	L	PF	PA
San Francisco	4	136	62
San Diego	3	144	84
Denver	1	114	161
Seattle	0	69	171
American Conference			
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Indianapolis	5	155	78
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New England	3	144	84
NY Jets	0	69	171
Central division			
W	L	PF	PA
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Houston	3	144	84
Philadelphia	1	114	161
Cincinnati	0	69	171
Western division			
W	L	PF	PA
Denver	5	155	78
Kansas City	4	126	124
San Diego	3	144	84
Cleveland	2	114	161
Seattle	0	69	171

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Animal crackers and beastly behaviour

What does a cassette tape look like when it has lodged in the intestines of a puppy? Well, fans of the crumbly-plumage could tell you, because Vets' School started last night on BBC1, and it's just a wonder nobody thought of it before. Formula-wise, *Vets' School* is an excellent hybrid for popular television: follow the tribulations of nervous students (some will fail); weep for sick puppies and old blind rabbits as mood music tinkles; thrill to get surgery in close-up. All it needs additionally is a voice-over from Michael Buerk, and some brave men of the emergency services, and it could be on telly 24 hours a day.

Unintentional comedy is the surprise bonus in *Vets' School*, supplied by a Norwegian student called Trude - a young woman of knock-down prettiness and long blonde plaits, whose academic knowledge was cheerfully charac-

terised by her teachers last night as "appalling", and whose attempts to inject a kitten left the poor mewling creature with a neck full of holes. Would her examiners fail her? Ever since the infamous sacking of the Covent Garden box office manager in *The House*, viewers have comfortably watched brutal assessments behind closed doors - in this case, ruthlessly interspersed with a confident Trude showing signs of her family in Norway, all rooting for her from the jury. Trude is a funny, knitted hat, I watched Trude with an unusual detachment. Should we root for Trude to "undo" her perhaps value kittens' necks too much? Only time will tell.

Meanwhile there were lots of animal stories too, including guinea pigs called Robinson and Jerome. Heidi the golden retriever slipped fast into a mysterious coma, while the puppy with the cassette tape evoked the best projectile weeping

of the evening, when his owner Lisa couldn't afford his operation, and hugged him close with big tears rolling off her nose. Regular readers may remember that during the wildlife vets series *Back to the Wild*, I commended a little game "Spot the Still", to be played each week. Unusually callous, I admit, but on the other hand these programmes are quite cynically calculated to induce tears and cheers - so it's just a bit of bravado to combat the manipulation. The still this week was the old blind rabbit, and it was awful.

Channel 4's *Cutting Edge* was *Family Feuds*, which I assumed in my innocence would tell true-life stories of silly people no longer speaking to each other because the didn't get equal shares in a Georgian silver teapot. Well, how wrong can you be? Georgian silver teapots were nowhere to be seen in this litany of



Lynne Truss

vicious mental cruelty and physical hurt. One couple suffered months of persistent phone calls and hives - a campaign waged by a disgruntled sister, who ordered pizzas, taxis and removal men at any time of the day or night. This was, now in review, less a comedy than a horror story. It was unwise, but it was easy in picture here: sitting on the stairs with phone and ashtray at her elbow and the *Yellow Pages* lying

open and dog-eared in her lap. Worst of all was the last story, of rough father and son Ken and Sean, from Solihull - a story so unpleasant and unprecedented on telly that it was tempting to hope it was all made up. It began with Sean showing us a picture of his father in his incubator. "If I'd known what he was going to do," said Ken with a grimace. "I'd have smothered the little bastard." What had Sean done? Had he turned to the bad? Sold drugs, perhaps? A few shades of blue through one's head before Sean told us that his dad had actually put out a contract on him. Ken told us he would certainly kill Sean himself, if he got the chance - because Sean was a police informer against the Firm, and had transgressed everything I believed in.

Combating the moral vertigo wasn't easy. Here was a story without tears or cheers, with no

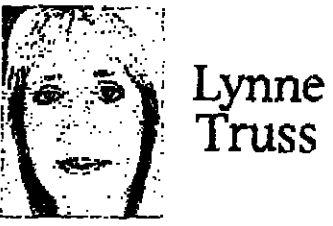
place for normal sentiment. *Omertà* seemed to be the issue, only these people weren't Sicilian. In the good old days before the rift, Sean had made a video of a police informer having his head beaten to a pulp, and Ken showed us that video as if it were a pair of baby shoes, so that we could share his feelings of loss. At which point I lost the struggle with moral vertigo, and blacked out.

Back with the truly brutal, the three-part drama *Wilderness* (ITV) finished last night with the best possible outcome: a senseless blood-letting, happy wolfing through remote woods, inadequate Welsh boy-friend, and broken-down pacifist/analyst certified and medicated. Ha ha ha. Apart from the terrible theme music (remnant of *Tales of the Unexpected*), *Wilderness* was a great success: intelligent and suspenseful, and

people who complain about the wolf behaving like an Andrew puppy are simply asking too much. Usually I warn dissenters, "Just imagine if Carlton had made it!" which shuts them up. But in this case Carlton did make it, so it doesn't have the impact. Meanwhile Amanda Combs, with her eyes always wet and questioning, and hair on end like Gary Rhodes, has single-handedly revived the figure of the infant savage - and we hadn't even noticed it had gone.

Finally, back in the realm of the resolutely human, the last Mastermind of the series (BBC1) gave the trophy to Richard Storch, a parish priest in nice sandals who answered questions on Gilbert and Sullivan. In the context of so much rough stuff, it was a little piece of heaven. Ask this nice old gent why someone would call their guinea pig Robinson and Jerome and he wouldn't know. Well, bless him for that.

REVIEW



Barry McGuigan

Barry McGuigan (8.30pm)

Barry McGuigan (8.30pm)

CHOICE

Citizen's Arrest

Citizen's Arrest

WITNESS: Manhunter

Witness: Manhunter

NETWORK FIRST: The Connection

Network First: The Connection

SKY SPORTS 3

Sky Sports 3

SKY MOVIES GOLD

Sky Movies Gold

THE DISNEY CHANNEL

The Disney Channel

SKY SPORTS 1

Sky Sports 1

RTV

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WEST COUNTRY

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BASEBALL 47

New York Yankees power through to World Series

SPORT

TUESDAY OCTOBER 15 1996

GOLF 49

Jaguar makes short work of regional challenge



World champion savours success

Hill settles into new life in the fast lane

FROM OLIVER HOLT IN TOKYO

SPEED clung to Damon Hill yesterday, reluctant to release the new Formula One champion from his giddy grip. The lingering adrenalin from the perfect drive that brought him his first title in Suzuka on Sunday woke him in the early hours of the morning, before a train as sleek and as swift as a bullet bore him here to the capital.

Hill sat with his wife, Georgie, at the front of one of the carriages on the Bullet Train as it hurtled along at more than 100mph. For much of the two-hour journey he signed autographs for excited fans, accepted the congratulations of passing passengers and endured television and media interviews.

He was surrounded by officials from his Williams team and their main sponsors, Rothmans, who were shepherding him through his first engagement as the world champion. Once or twice he wandered a few rows further down the carriage, which was packed with doing businessmen, to speak to Murray Walker, the motor racing commentator.

Even when Hill got here, things would not slow down. He was ushered from Tokyo Central station, through heavy traffic and pouring rain, straight to the Reuters building for a solid afternoon of television interviews. GMTV, the BBC and ITN were all queuing for slots alongside other stations from all over the world.

It was not until after 7pm that Hill was able to check in at his hotel in the Shinjuku district and attempt to relax. At least the building was so tall and the weather so bad that a room on the 47th floor ensured he was able to keep his head in the clouds for one more night before the journey home to England today.

The night before, of course, had been one of prolonged celebration, starting off with three glasses of champagne, courtesy of the patron of the Rothmans motor home, an extrovert Austrian who brings his own cannon to races and fires it off in the paddock after the action is over.

Next, he rode a moped halfway around the Suzuka track and steered it straight into the foyer of his hotel to avoid being mobbed by huge groups of, by now, semi-crazed autograph hunters. Then, as is de rigueur for champions crowned at this circuit, he headed for the Log Cabin, a small group of bars on the infield.

As it approached midnight and the tumult was at its height, revellers in the hut colonised by Hill and his wife and friends — familiar, now, with endless renditions of *We are the Champions* and *My Way* — were treated to the sight of Michael Schumacher, the deposed champion and the Englishman's greatest rival, singing along to the *Dad's Army* theme tune.

The words had been changed to "Who do you think you are kidding Michael Schumacher, if you think you can keep old Damon down", and Schumacher, who finished third in the championship behind Hill and his Williams-Renault team-mate, Jacques Villeneuve, appeared to be playing his part with relish.

Hill was still acting like a livewire on the train despite the remnants of a hangover and the constant attention, still letting the realisation that he was world champion sink dreamily into his soul.

"It is irreversible," he said. "That is the thing. There is no way anyone can undo my achievement. It is done. It is such an enormous relief to have crossed over the threshold and to have joined the very, very few who have become world champion. It is a relief that all the hard work is over, all the effort to keep your mind working in the right way. It is the same relief anyone feels when they know they are going to get a break for a while."

"It is as though someone has taken a brake off my brain and now I can relax for the first time in such a long time and just be normal. Even more than relief, though, the sense of triumph is overwhelming. It was what I so wanted to do and I have achieved it. It is very satisfying."

Hill will take a break from motor racing for a month, spending time with his family in Dublin and taking them on holiday. He will then start his driving duties for the TWR Arrows team he joined after the surprising decision by Frank Williams, the Williams team manager, to release him after this year.

"I am not thinking about jobs that lie ahead really, though," Hill said. "I am just drinking it all in at the moment. I am taking a rest from setting myself goals for a while. I am not considering anything other than what I have just done and what I have achieved. I am going to enjoy that even though I am one of those mad people who cannot relax for too long. I start worrying if I am not doing anything."

He was followed by Kinch Christie, a coach of superb quality who suffered from illness as well as an independence of mind which allowed him to take or leave one of the most onerous sporting posts. Morné du Plessis was third, a former Springbok captain who, as team manager, crossed the divide of colour so successfully and who spoke of his country's future with such sincerity.

Now the captain, Pienaar, whose exchange with the national president, Nelson Mandela, in the minutes following the defeat of New Zealand created the lasting image of the 1995 World Cup, joins them in rugby obscurity. But there was substance to the image, the drive towards the "affirmative action" through which rugby could cross racial barriers, which was recog-

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Transvaal — and Pienaar. Moreover, Keith Parkinson, the Natal president, has resigned from the Sarfu executive committee in protest. "I now have extreme difficulty in accepting and condoning the new face of South African rugby," he said. There are plausible excuses for disbanding the successful management team: Christie's health (though he is now recovered); du Plessis's own desire to leave from which he could surely have been dissuaded; Pienaar's form following a neck injury in August. One withdrawal might have been acceptable, even two, but to lose all four members of so intelligent and perceptive a team is downright careless.

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The selectors are doing what they feel is best for South African rugby," Luyt said. "Their motives are honest and genuine and to suggest anything else is appalling." But the heat is now on Markgraaff: he has a golden era in Springbok rugby hanging over him like a cloud and if he cannot find playing success, and swiftly, he could be the next casualty.



Making tracks: Hill and his wife, Georgie, are the focus of attention from fans and the media on the Bullet Train to Tokyo yesterday

FA charges Bosnich with misconduct

BY RICHARD HOBSON AND PETER BALL

MARK BOSNICH, the Aston Villa goalkeeper, has been charged with misconduct by the Football Association after his Nazi-style salute to Tottenham Hotspur supporters during the FA Carling Premiership game at White Hart Lane last Saturday, and could also face criminal charges as police investigations continue.

Bosnich, 24, issued an open statement of regret through his agent yesterday morning addressed to "anyone offended, hurt or dumbfounded" and spent the rest of the day torn between bewilderment and contrition. The only good news came when Brian Little, the Villa manager, said that his place in the team was not in jeopardy as a result of the gesture. That is not to say, however, that he will escape punishment from his club.

An FA spokesman said that the disciplinary panel has made contact with the police before issuing a misconduct charge. It is unlikely to hear

the case before the police have finished their own investigations and passed on those findings to the Crown Prosecution Service, who will decide whether to charge Bosnich with a public order offence.

Scotland Yard is annoyed at suggestions that action by the FA was ever an alternative to their own procedure. "I can assure people that we are continuing to investigate thoroughly," a Yard spokesman said. Bosnich could be questioned by police for a second time, having been interviewed, along with Little, immediately after the game, which Villa lost 1-0.

Bosnich, booked by the referee, Peter Jones, for ungentlemanly conduct, reaffirmed his sorrow yesterday and continued to maintain that his gesture was a "split second prank", an imitation of Basil Fawlty, that backfired.

He said that he was unaware of Tottenham's Jewish links and said: "You can call it a moment of madness if you like. Anti-Semitism and racism are crimes against humanity; ignorance and joc-

ularity are not. You can accuse me of making a bad taste joke but anything else I think is very, very harsh."

Bosnich is clearly conducting a damage limitation exercise. He pointed out that he has a Jewish aunt himself and has previously spoken of the way he was persecuted as a child in Australia because of his Croatian background.

"I lost family in the Second

Newcastle's fears 48
Money-go-round 48
High-flying Dadds 48

World War and in the recent war in Yugoslavia," he added. He said he regretted what he sees as the widening gulf between players and supporters. He made the gesture as a way of acknowledging cries of "one Jürgen Klinsmann" from Tottenham supporters, a reference to a game two seasons ago when he was involved in a collision with the German striker, then a Tottenham player.

Grant Bovey, head of Cruise

Holdings, has been approached by two Premiership clubs since his attempt to take over Nottingham Forest at a cost of £30 million became public at the weekend.

Bovey, 35, met the Forest chairman, Fred Reacher, and his fellow directors in London last week. However, Keith Gibson, one of those directors, said that he did not feel the club "would be progressing" with a man who was raised a few miles out of the city and watched his first football from the old terraces on the Trent End at the City Ground.

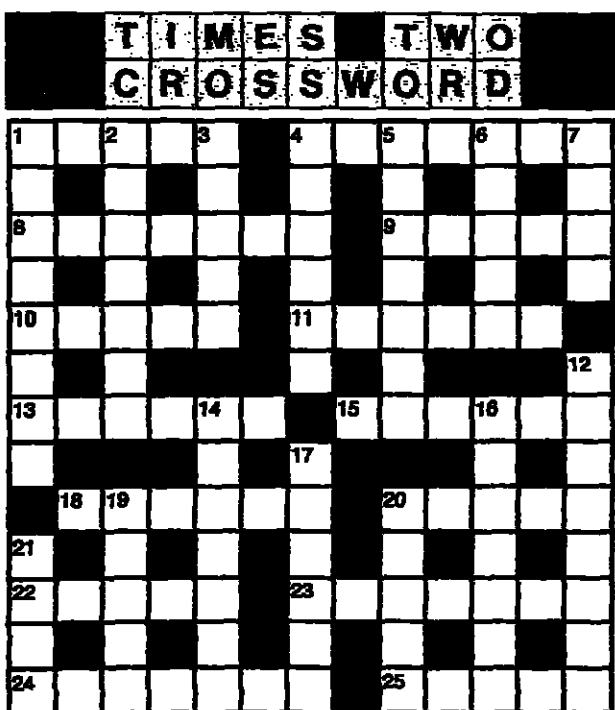
Bovey said: "If they decide they would rather go forward with somebody else then fine. Football is moving very quickly and on the back of the publicity, two clubs have been in touch because they thought I might be in a position to invest in them. But I would not have approached anybody except Forest."

Sheffield Wednesday yesterday completed the signing of Benito Carbone, the midfield player from Internazionale, for £3 million. The fee is a record for the club.

Carbone has few qualms about inheriting Chris Waddle's No 8 shirt. "I'm not worried by that prospect at all," he said. "I'm not aware of how famous a player he was with Wednesday. All I know is how famous Diego Maradona was at Napoli when I took over his No 10 shirt. Then at Inter, I took over the No 10 shirt again — this time from Dennis Bergkamp."

Carbone's arrival means that David Pleat, the Wednesday manager, has spent nearly £7 million this summer, totally revamping the side. Carbone's transfer sets a record after the £2.75 million previously paid by Trevor Francis for Des Walker and Andy Sinton.

Pleat's previous highest signing was Andy Booth for £2.65 million from Huddersfield Town in the summer. Carbone will fit into midfield alongside Orlando Trustfull and Regi Blinker on the other wing. Pleat hopes to have the forms complete in time to face Blackburn Rovers at Hillsborough on Saturday.



No 913

ACROSS

- 1 Vulgarly cheeky, assertive (5)
- 4 Harsh, bitter (manner) (7)
- 5 Meet (requirements) (7)
- 9 Customary (5)
- 10 Bearskin (5)
- 11 Disorderly (6)
- 13.15 Common language (6,6)
- 18 Hackneyed phrase (6)
- 20 (Judge) finally address jury (3,2)
- 22 Small weight; big cat (5)
- 23 When eg school on show to public (4,3)
- 24 Similar, related (7)
- 25 Happen again (5)

DOWN

- 1 US summer game (8)
- 2 Skilled workman (once) (7)
- 3 Hoarse; sled dog (5)
- 4 Sanctuary (6)
- 5 Hemisphere-dividing line (7)
- 6 In slavery; jump (5)
- 7 Choose (best members); kill (weak member) (4)
- 12 Contributor to Revenue (8)
- 14 Vague, hazy (7)
- 16 Of a wandering life (7)
- 17 Lacking (with off) (6)
- 18 Flax fabric (5)
- 20 Precipitous; utter (5)
- 21 People (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 912

ACROSS: 1 Jude 3 Decrepit 9 Vouch 10 Bubbles
11 Nulify 12 Inman 14 Lucate 16 Adjoin 18 Pole 19 Manager
22 Absolve 23 Sward 24 Sidle 25 Bee

DOWN: 1 Juvenile 2 Double-crossed 4 Embryo 5 Rebuild
6 Pull a long face 7 Test 8 Thai 13 Intruder 15 Trellis
17 Impede 20 Nash 21 Bass

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South Africa's new rugby regime needs swift success

David Hands on the upheavals that are tearing the Springboks apart

A MERE 16 months ago, South African rugby possessed two dream teams: the XV which won the World Cup and the four-man team which contrived to put positive an image not only of their sport but of their country. Now the first is broken and the second, with the omission of Francois Pienaar from the party to tour Argentina, France, and Wales this autumn, is gone.

Given the interposed politics of South African rugby one should not be surprised, yet the loss of a management team of such quality creates a melancholy record. First to go was Edward Griffiths who, as the South African Rugby Football Union's (SARFU) chief executive, liaised with the media; a former political speech writer, Griffiths coined the phrase "one team, one nation", so apt for the time.

He was followed by Kinch Christie, a coach of superb quality who suffered from illness as well as an independence of mind which allowed him to take or leave one of the most onerous sporting posts. Morné du Plessis was third, a former Springbok captain who, as team manager, crossed the divide of colour so successfully and who spoke of his country's future with such sincerity.

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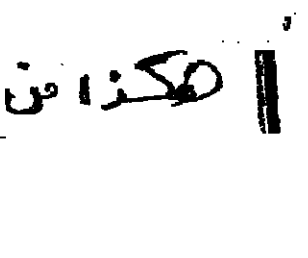
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Fayers banned, page 47
All Black power, page 47



Pienaar: omitted

Inter set to contest Ince's ban

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

INTERNAZIONALE are to appeal against the suspension received by Paul Ince, the England midfielder player, who was sent off at the weekend after being subjected to racist abuse.

The trouble started when Gianpiero Piovani, the Piacenza defender, went over to Ince and shouted racist abuse at him as they waited for a corner.

Ince responded by touching Piovani lightly on the shoulder and his opponent, who has since admitted feigning injury, dropped to the ground. Ince will now be given either a one or two-match ban, but Inter can appeal against the verdict before the disciplinary committee on Friday.

A spokeswoman for Inter said: "Our lawyers are now preparing an appeal to the disciplinary committee." Massimo Moratti, the club president, hopes Ince's case will not even get that far. He told the *Gazzetta dello Sport*: "I hope that he will be cleared by sporting judiciary. I hope there will be an amnesty for an offence which was never committed."

Inter face playing their toughest match so far this season, against Juventus, the European champions, next weekend, without the man who has become the linchpin of their midfield.

Ince, who was subjected to racial abuse from the crowd against Cremonese last season, was furious about the incident. "I didn't do anything wrong, and I'm really angry with Piovani, because first he insulted me and afterwards he made a real scene," he said.

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That already we have agreed to run our economy for the benefit of Europe as a whole? So decisions taken in Brussels can result in increasing your taxes and lowering your income.

And that now it is planned that we abandon to Brussels control of our foreign policy, our national security and our borders?

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As you will see from our Party Conference in Brighton on Saturday, we are not politicians and do not want to be politicians.

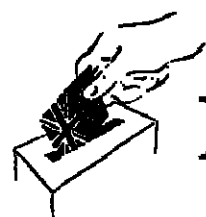
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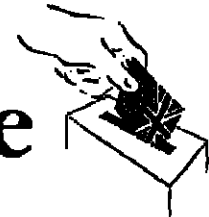
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Changing the guard for a second Clinton reign

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER
IN WASHINGTON

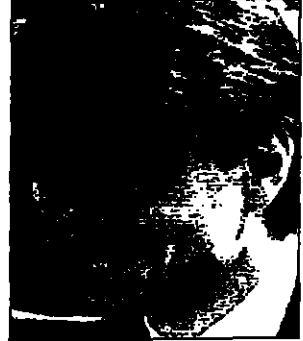
TWO of President Clinton's top advisers, George Stephanopoulos and the Defence Secretary, William Perry, yesterday disclosed that they might not serve in a second Clinton Administration. A host of other senior officials, including the US Ambassadors to London and Paris, are also expected to leave if the President wins re-election.

Mr Stephanopoulos, who is 35 and the last survivor of Mr Clinton's 1992 campaign team, told *New Yorker* magazine that after five tough years at Mr Clinton's side he was burnt out. "I've had a great run, a great ride, but it feels like I'm done. It's not that I'm above it, but I can't do it any more. I just have to grow up."

Mr Perry, who is 69, told *The Wall Street Journal* he was profoundly ambivalent about his job and may leave before the year's end, although he insisted: "I haven't decided."

Mr Perry is widely respected and has calmed the Pentagon following Les Aspin's short, tempestuous reign, but has recently faced harsh criticism over the terrorist attack that killed 19 American servicemen in Saudi Arabia, the American response to Iraqi provocations, and the disclosure that troops would remain in Bosnia beyond December's deadline.

Warren Christopher, 70, the Secretary of State, is also expected to depart, further disrupting Mr Clinton's foreign policy team. Mr Christopher calls such speculation premature, but he is tired, his



George Stephanopoulos, left, and William Perry have hinted that they will not serve a second term



dream of a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement is fading, and his wife wants to return to California. Last week he broke James Baker's record as America's most travelled Secretary of State. Madeleine

Albright, the United Nations Ambassador, is pressing hard to succeed him. She is thought to have Hillary Clinton's support and Mr Clinton would love to appoint America's first female Secretary of State, but



Madeleine Albright wants to be Secretary of State, but George Mitchell would also like the post



there is resistance within the State Department.

Other contenders would be George Mitchell, presently Mr Clinton's emissary to Northern Ireland, Senators Sam Nunn, Chris Dodd or

Richard Lugar, Tony Lake, the National Security Adviser, and Thomas Pickering, the former Ambassador to Russia. Richard Holbrooke, architect of the Bosnian peace accord, is often mentioned but he is a

great self-promoter and poor team player. Strobe Talbott, Mr Christopher's deputy, would face confirmation problems unless the Democrats won the Senate and would more likely replace Mr Lake if he left the White House.

Admiral William Crowe, the US Ambassador in London, was unavailable yesterday, but officials in Washington expect him to leave early next year, if only because his wife is ill. Tom Foley, the former House Speaker and noted anglophile, would be an obvious choice to succeed him.

Pamela Harriman, US Ambassador in Paris, has equivocated since telling *The Washington Post* last April that "I've had enough", but officials expect she would return. Jean Kennedy Smith, the controversial US Ambassador

in Dublin, would almost certainly stay on.

Mass exodus by exhausted staff are common when Presidents begin second terms and this would be no exception. Leon Panetta, the White House Chief of Staff, would almost certainly return to California and might run for Governor in 1998.

Other senior officials who are expected to go are CIA Director John Deutch, who angered the White House by saying recent American action against Iraq had strengthened President Saddam Hussein; Hazel O'Leary, the Energy Secretary, whose lavish overseas travel has embarrassed the President; and Henry Cisneros, the Housing Secretary, who was investigated for concealing payments to a mistress.

Jester Gingrich plays politics of pantomime

FROM IAN BRODIE IN ATLANTA

NEWT GINGRICH cuts a tragicomic figure as he traipses around his constituency on the outskirts of Atlanta, brandishing a plastic bucket.

The chubby Speaker of the House of Representatives, and erstwhile leader of the Republican "revolution", has a diminished role in this year's election, other than as the butt of Democrats' stunts.

He lugs the bucket everywhere. Between stops it sits beside him in his minivan. This pantomime prop is a memento from his glory days two years ago when "Newt's army" of Republicans wrested control of the House from Democrats after 40 years.

He promptly cancelled twice-daily deliveries of buckets of ice to every House member. The service employed 14, cost \$500,000 and had survived the invention of refrigerators for 80 years. "Here is a symbol of how we stopped the Democrats wasting your money," Mr Gingrich said, plunking his bucket on the lectern at a fund-raiser.

If only his *Contract With America* had been as simple. As it was, he ran into interference from President Clinton and intransigence from other Republicans. Parts of his plan passed, including welfare reform. Other ideas foundered, among them a balanced budget amendment to the American Constitution.

True, Washington embraced the Gingrich mantra

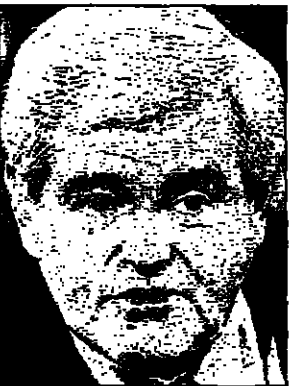


ELECTION '96

that big government's days are numbered, but his radical conservatism quickly caused alarm. Democrats assailed his talk of reviving orphanages. He was attacked for saying that the agency running Medicare should "wither on the vine". He was ridiculed as a "cry baby" for complaining that his shabby treatment on Mr Clinton's plane had contributed to a government shutdown over the budget. In short, Mr Gingrich talked too much. His rhetoric was incendiary and frightening.

He had been hailed — amazingly in retrospect — as a potential President before plummeting from being *Time* man of the year to one of the most unpopular politicians in America. Adding to his troubles, he is still dogged by an ethics investigation into tangled allegations that he had used tax-exempt donations improperly. Nowadays Mr Gingrich is a pariah, even among Republicans. Many blame him for Mr Clinton's resurgence. He is like a West End actor relegated to rep. The oratory is still there, but the crowds and media interest have fallen away sharply.

Mr Gingrich's seat is considered safe. He won his solidly Republican district with 64 per cent last time and he faces an unlikely Democrat, Michael Coles, a multimillionaire who founded the Great American Cookie Co with 400 branches selling big, gooey biscuits. Known as Cookie Monster, he is spending lavishly in the hope that Mr Gingrich will crumble. Luckily for the Speaker, Mr Coles is a political novice.



Gingrich: a pariah even among Republicans

California puts Dole team in disarray

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX
IN WASHINGTON

BOB DOLE, his wife Elizabeth and his running-mate Jack Kemp descended on California yesterday with the Republican campaign strategy for one of the most crucial electoral states in disarray.

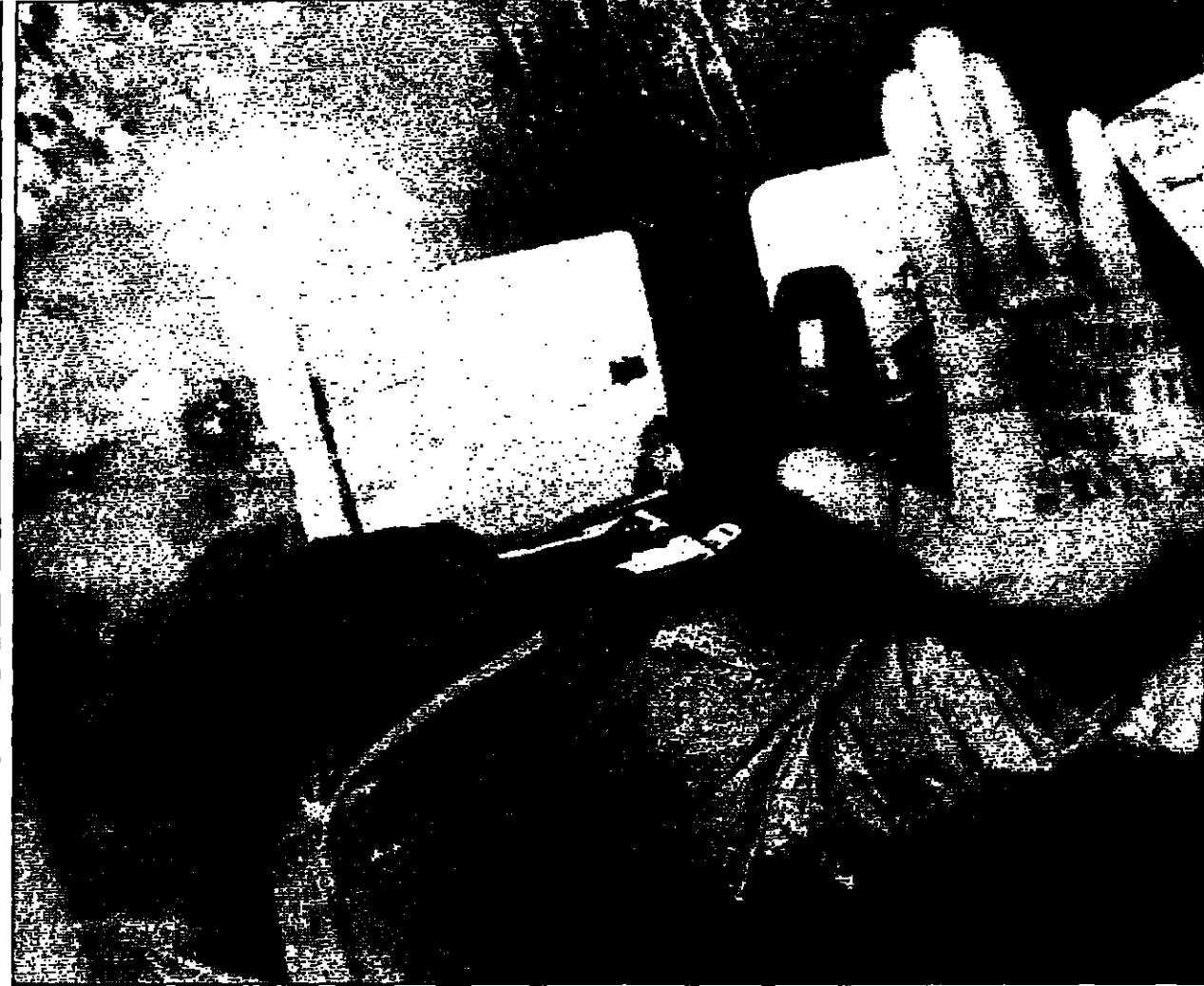
Mr Dole, who faces President Clinton in the second and final presidential debate tomorrow in San Diego, southern California, is reported to be considering an eleven-hour blitz on the Golden State. That would scotch persistent rumours that he is planning to abandon California, where he lags heavily in the polls but it would drain millions of dollars from his campaign in other important states where he stands more chance of winning.

As the presidential race enters its last three weeks, Mr Dole, who continues to trail the President by double-digit margins in most polls, is wavering over the central planks of his strategy, including whether to criticise Mr Clinton's morals and where to deploy limited resources.

California offers a fifth of the electoral college votes needed for victory and Mr Clinton's campaign throughout has regarded it as a cornerstone of its electoral strategy. The state has a reputation for being harsh on candidates who neglect it and Mr Clinton has swamped it with attention, visiting 29 times in four years.

Republican advisers say they are taking encouragement from Friday's respected Field Institute poll, which indicated that Mr Clinton's lead in California had narrowed by four percentage points, to ten points. Newt Gingrich, the Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives, has also been urging Mr Dole not to write off California.

However, Dole aides are saying in private that money and attention are now being focused as much on those areas where congressional candidates need help as on those where Mr Dole himself can reasonably hope to win.



Mordechai Vanunu's message to the media outside a Jerusalem court explaining his kidnapping by Mossad in 1986

Ten years on, Israel's nuclear whistle blower stays defiant

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN TEL AVIV

AFTER spending 3,662 days in solitary confinement, the longest recently endured by any prisoner in the Western world, Mordechai Vanunu, the Israeli technician who revealed Israel's nuclear secrets to *The Sunday Times*, remains defiant.

Yesterday a truncated message to the outside world from the man who, at his last supreme court appearance in December was forced to wear a mask to prevent him speaking to the media, was read to the first international conference of his supporters by Susannah York, the actress.

In words dictated to one of his brothers before prison authorities could intervene and return him to the tiny cell

which has been his home since his kidnapping in 1986, Vanunu — who on Sunday marked his forty-second birthday — said: "I thank you all. I am happy for revealing what I revealed."

Ten years ago this month his story, carried across three pages of *The Sunday Times*, disclosed that Israel had a nuclear arsenal of between 100-200 warheads which has still never been admitted publicly and makes it the world's sixth nuclear power. The information has never been debated by the Israeli parliament and remains a non-subject in the Israeli media.

The two-day conference, shunned by a number of Israeli universities but eventually staged at a beachfront hotel amid the uncomfortable presence of secret service agents, was the biggest boost yet for Vanunu's hopes of securing release before 2004. Campaigners from around the world listened to details of his kidnapping by Mossad and his deteriorating mental state, including growing paranoia.

Among the many calls for his release was one from Anthony Grey, the former Reuters correspondent turned best-selling novelist.

"Having spent two years in solitary as a hostage in China, the heart quails at how a man can endure five times that period," he wrote. "Here is a man of great courage."

The gathering was staged less than 20 miles from the seaside home of the blonde agent codenamed "Cindy" who lured Vanunu into a trap by tempting him to fly from London to Rome. There he was drugged and later smuggled by sea to Israel.

The meeting was hailed by Joseph Rotblat, 87, winner of the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize. He argued that Vanunu was a "whistle-blower", not a spy or traitor. *Haaretz*, Israel's leading broadsheet, carried a front-page commentary backing Vanunu's release.

An enlarged photograph at the conference showed the message scrawled on Vanunu's palm outside a Jerusalem court that told the world of his kidnapping.

The imprisonment of nearly all dissidents presents President Clinton with a problem. He has maintained for a year that Communist China is more likely to treat dissidents better if Washington abandoned its threats of sanctions.

Mother to defend dissident son in trial

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKEY
IN HONG KONG

THE mother of Wang Dan, the Chinese dissident once named by China as its "most wanted" counter-revolutionary, is to defend her son in a coming trial at which he could be sentenced to death for allegedly attempting to overthrow the Government.

The action she is taking is unique in China's legal history. Mrs Wang Lingyun, 61, speaking on the phone yesterday from Peking, said her 26-year-old son wanted her to defend him, alongside his other lawyer. Mrs Wang believes the trial will begin this week. She will defend him against the charge that he had collaborated with foreign subversive elements, which she says amounts to no more than doing a correspondence course at the University of California.

Mr Wang's main lawyer will concentrate on the other charges against him, such as collaborating with internal counter-revolutionaries such as Wei Jingsheng, a nominee for this year's Nobel Peace Prize. Wei is presently serving a 14-year sentence; this was imposed two years after he completed nearly 15 years of a previous term.

Mr Wang, a student leader during the pro-democracy demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in 1989, was soon afterwards placed on top of the "most wanted" list. He served four years in prison, followed by constant detentions, until his disappearance into police custody 17 months ago. His parents say they have neither spoken to him since his detention, nor do they know where he is being held.

Mr Wang's trial comes just after last week's jailing of Liu Xiaobo, another Tiananmen veteran, for three years at a labour camp. In late September Liu had written a pamphlet with Wang Xizhe — another veteran dissident, who surfaced in Hong Kong over the weekend and was expected to fly to the United States last night — calling for the impeachment of President Jiang Zemin.

The imprisonment of nearly all dissidents presents President Clinton with a problem. He has maintained for a year that Communist China is more likely to treat dissidents better if Washington abandoned its threats of sanctions.



Wang Xizhe: smuggled out to Hong Kong

Thatcherite conversion ends ANC vision of road to socialism

WHEN the African National Congress took power in South Africa it was no secret that many of its most influential supporters — especially the Communist Party and the trade unions — saw its triumph as a stepping stone to full-blown socialism.

The crucial vehicle in this transformation was to be the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) — a massive exercise in state welfare and redistribution that was the heart of the ANC's 1994 election campaign. Officially, at least, this terminology still applies. The country is undergoing what is referred to as "the national democratic revolution" when the task of true progressives is to concert with the "patriotic bourgeoisie" against international capital, most egregiously represented

President Mandela's strategy to produce 6 per cent growth and 400,000 jobs a year in South Africa is foundering. R. W. Johnson writes in Johannesburg

ed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

Under the urgings of Thabo Mbeki, the Deputy President, the RDP has been shelved, indeed almost killed off. It is clear that virtually all the RDP targets will be missed by a mile, the programme's office has been shut down and in practice the Mandela Government has simply lapsed the administrative ability to spend the money allocated to the RDP.

More strikingly, though, the Government has quietly undergone

a conversion to Thatcherite economics. Inflation of about 8 per cent is being mercilessly squeezed down by one of the world's highest real interest rates — most homeowners are paying 18 per cent or more on their mortgages. The Government's macro-economic strategy, backed by the IMF and by Germany and Britain, calls for a draconian cut in the budget deficit from 6 per cent of gross domestic product to 3 per cent, a sweeping privatisation programme and the reduction of labour market inflex-

ibilities. To the growing chorus of discontent that this strategy has provoked, Mr Mbeki has even borrowed Thatcher's famous line: "There is no alternative."

The moment of truth lies just ahead with the March 1997 budget which must, according to Trevor Manuel, the Finance Minister, see the budget deficit cut to 4 per cent. The Government's Financial and Fiscal Commission is agitated to discover that once non-discretionary items are discounted, this will imply a 7 per cent cut in the expenditure of regional governments and a whopping 17 per cent cut in the expenditure of central government departments — with, of course, a further large reduction due thereafter if the 3 per cent deficit target is to be achieved.

Just how tough this is is best realised by watching the puffing and panting of European Union states to get down to the same 3 per cent deficit and 60 per cent debt ceilings laid down by Maastricht. South Africa, with far less fat to cut, is in effect aiming to meet the Maastricht criteria by 2000 although it has no EU to join.

The mood within the Finance Ministry as the possible cuts are reviewed is said to be tense, even panicky, for there is no doubt that the political reaction to austerity on this scale will be hugely unpopular with the ANC electorate. News that the Government has just taken its first loan from the World Bank has, irritatingly, spurred criticism on the Left but this will be nothing if, as seems certain, the unions face

large public-sector job cuts in the next budget and the Government eventually has to seek IMF support to sustain the rand when it finally abolishes exchange controls.

One has to admire the Government's courage in embarking on an economic policy so markedly different from anything that any other African regime has started life with. Mr Mbeki has placed his hopes on the bet that the new strategy will produce 6 per cent growth and 400,000 jobs a year by 2000.

The problem is that if the Government pushes ahead with its strategy, huge unpopularity is bound to follow. But if it backs away as the strategy's true costs become clear, it risks a further collapse in investor confidence and the value of the rand.



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Christopher Thomas reports from Kabul as Taleban's vital supply line is cut

Warlords lay plans to recapture the capital

FORCES opposing Taleban met in the strategic Salang Pass yesterday to discuss moving south to capture Kabul, Afghanistan's capital. Their two top commanders met in a jubilant mood at a spot surrounded by the snow-covered Hindu Kush mountains. The anti-Taleban forces have consolidated their hold on the important towns of Jaber-ol-Siraj and Charikar, a few hours' drive north of Kabul. This puts them within striking distance of the capital and has denied the Islamic warriors, who captured the city on September 27, a vital supply line to their forward positions. General Ahmed Shah Massoud, the defence chief of the ousted Government, met General Abdul Rashid Dostum, the Uzbek warlord who controls six northern provinces, for talks. General Dostum, who yesterday recognised Afghanistan's ousted Government, has massive amounts of armaments, including fighter aircraft. He has close relations



A Taleban fighter with a machinegun prepares to leave Kabul for a frontline position as Islamic warriors lost more ground to ousted government forces

with the former Soviet republic of Uzbekistan, which supplies much of his equipment. General Dostum's forces have not been directly involved in the counter-offensive so far. There were small-scale fighting last night less than ten miles north of Kabul, mostly in a battle for control of the important Bagram military airbase. General Said Jaffer Naderi, a senior member of General Dostum's forces, said his backing so far had been logistical. "This meeting is to decide the future - what we will do together. Working together is the only way to defend Afghanistan." He added that it was hoped to take Kabul by negotiation, but hinted at an offensive if such tactics failed. Taleban insisted last night that it retained control of Bagram airbase and that Kabul was too heavily fortified to fall. It is making the presumption that General Massoud will not attack Kabul with shells and rockets because of the

inevitable civilian casualties. General Massoud has said that he withdrew from the city to save it from shelling by Taleban. General Masood, whose Tajik forces are centred on the Panjshir Valley 40 miles north of Kabul, has again demonstrated his prowess as a guerrilla fighter. In the 1980s he was a hero of the war against the Soviet Union, which never

conquered the valley or flushed General Massoud out of it, despite carpet-bombing and landing thousands of paratroops, most of whom perished. Tajik civilians flocked to join his army yesterday. They are fired with the thought of marching back into Kabul, which General Massoud seized in April 1992 from the former Communist Government of President Najibullah, who Taleban hanged last month after seizing him from a United Nations compound. General Dostum's forces occupied strategic positions around Charikar and Jaber-ol-Siraj yesterday. If the two armies jointly attack they could probably drive Taleban out of the capital, but civilian losses probably would be high. General Dostum reiterated last night that he would prefer to take Kabul by negotiation. Taleban said yesterday that it was ready for peace talks with General Dostum, but that negotiations with General Massoud were out of the question. It also announced the establishment of a commission to consider the status of women, who have been ordered to stay at home and give up their jobs. Its report would take "some time" to prepare, Taleban said. It would ultimately be up to the high court to decide whether women could work and what clothes they should wear. This will not satisfy international aid agencies, whose work is being severely disrupted because of the absence of women to implement some of their projects.

WORLD SUMMARY

Kurdish rebels advance

Nicosia: Iraqi Kurds opposed to Baghdad made further gains yesterday after recapturing their stronghold of Sulaimaniya on Sunday but said they would not attempt to retake the key city of Arbil as it was ringed by Iraqi tanks. (Michael Theodorou writes). Patriotic Union of Kurdistan forces were reported to have fought to within 25 miles of Arbil, from which they were ousted in August by the Kurdistan Democratic Party.

UN condemns Cyprus killing

Nicosia: The United Nations peacekeeping force in Cyprus condemned the shooting of Petros Kakoulis, a Greek Cypriot who strayed into Turkish-held territory on Sunday (Michael Theodorou writes). The UN said the killing was a "deplorable and unnecessary use of lethal force".

Court overturns scarf expulsions

Grenoble: A court here has overturned the expulsion by two French schools in 1994 of seven Muslim schoolgirls for refusing to take off traditional headscarves in class, judicial officials said. The expulsions had caused widespread anger among France's three million Muslims. (AFP)

Children's scrap sparks gunfight

Cairo: A squabble between two small children in south Egypt led to a clash with machineguns between their Coptic Christian and Muslim families, wounding 20 people including their fathers, police said. Police arrested 15 people who took part in the fighting. (AFP)

It's a snip

Blenheim, New Zealand: A mother of six made a successful £147 bid for a vasection for her husband at a charity auction in this South Island town, the New Zealand Press Association reported. (Reuters)

Pariah widows bear brunt of city's despair

By Christopher Thomas

KABUL'S 30,000 war widows are despondent. Their families throw them out, there is no hope of remarriage, their malnourished children must scavenge. And now, banned from working, many are on the edge of starvation. Widows, who are often also blamed for their husbands' deaths - they failed to pray hard enough for their safety - are the greatest victims of Taleban's ban on female employment. Many are squatters in bombed-out houses that cling to the rocky hills surrounding the capital, a subculture of Afghanistan's most desperate and isolated people. "We are no better than dogs," Farzana, about 25, says. Before the Taleban Islamic militia captured Kabul last month, Farzana worked in a project run by Care International, teaching women how to

My husband's family threw me out: they could not feed me or my children

knit. She earned enough to feed herself and her two children, aged six and four, but now she must stay at home and ponder a desperate future. Her husband was killed in a rocket attack on Kabul four years ago and since then she has lived from her knitting skills. Now she cannot even work from home because Care does not have any Afghan women employees to deliver wool. A man would not be allowed to deliver supplies under Taleban's strict segregation rules. War widows, who have an average of four to five children, live alone or with groups of other widows, such as their pariah status. Many are beggars, sitting silently hour after hour at the entrances of mosques, wrapped in a

burqa (veil), or wandering the streets with hands outstretched. Some used to scratch a living by going door-to-door offering to wash clothes or clean houses, but even that has stopped. They could earn about a pound a day doing domestic work, enough for two or three large pieces of naan (bread). Heather Robinson, 31, from Liverpool, who works in Kabul for Care, said half the widows had debts of about £20, usually owed to the baker, a neighbour or a relation. A survey of 5,000 widows conducted by Care found that 76 per cent had no income and survived from scavenging or borrowing. Before war broke out 17 years ago, widows and their children were traditionally protected by the late

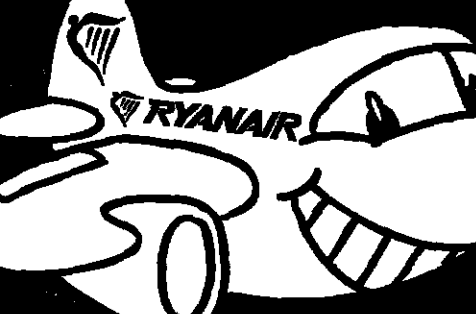
Refugee families flee to Pakistan

FROM REUTERS IN PESHAWAR

husband's extended family, but such charity is impossible now that Afghanistan is all but penniless. The Kabul office of Action Contre la Faim says half the city's 290,000 children aged under five are stunted. More than 23,000 are acutely or severely malnourished. Diljan, 31, widowed three years ago in a rocket attack on the capital, said she was too frightened to go on the street because she might be beaten up by Taleban soldiers for leaving her home. "I am bitter," she said. "My husband's family threw me out because they could not feed me or my children." Her son, 11, works in the bazaar, supplying the family's only income. Like all Afghan women, she moved in with her husband's family after marriage and rarely left the house. She is illiterate, like all but 1 or 2 per cent of Afghan women.

AT LEAST 10,000 Afghans have fled to Pakistan since the capture of Kabul by Taleban, a United Nations official said yesterday. "About 9,000 to 10,000 people have come to the Nasir Bagh camp on the outskirts of Peshawar," Anoush Daneshwar, deputy head of mission for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said in Islamabad. "The real figure is much higher because many people go and stay with their relatives and are not registered by UNHCR or the Pakistani authorities." Mr Daneshwar said 50 to 70

families a day had been heading east from Kabul in the past week, but described this as normal for the time of year, when many people move to the eastern city of Jalalabad to escape the harsh Kabul winter. But Taleban fighters have intervened to stop men from taking families or household goods with them. Dushanbe, Tajikistan: Six Islamic rebels were killed in clashes with Russian troops while trying to cross the border from Afghanistan and a soldier died when a Tajik army unit was attacked, according to officials. (AP)



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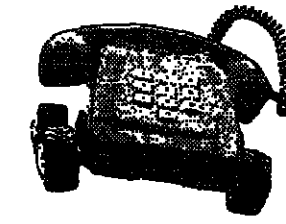
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Day two: Maureen Freely on the results of feminism; Giles Coren on manliness; Lotte Hughes on Masai men

Neither slipper slave nor hairy-leg brigade



THE SECOND SEX?

In *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf imagines herself in the British Museum, reading a monumental work by a Professor von X entitled: *The Mental, Moral, and Physical Inferiority of the Female Sex*. Why, she wonders, did he and so many other male authors need to give the subject so much time and energy?

She concludes that they needed to think of women as weak so that they might feel strong in comparison. "Women have served all these centuries as looking-glasses, possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size. Without that power the earth would still be swamp and jungle," she says — but with it, men "start the day confident, braced, believing themselves desired at Miss Smith's tea party; they say to themselves as they go into the room, I am the superior of half the people here..."

In the 50-odd years since Woolf wrote those lines, the Professor von Xs of the world have had to make do with an ever-decreasing stock of magic looking-glasses. They blame feminism for this tragedy, so naturally they wish it would just go away.

Like excited Romanovs, they live in perpetual mourning for the days when manual labourers could look forward to playing tsar in the comfort of their own homes.

This is true even of men who would never dream of uttering a misogynist sentence. Too often they speak wistfully about having come into manhood a generation too late.



The most dangerous sexism is not in male attitudes, but in the idea that one sex has to take precedence over the other

More than once, I have seen Frank, my own staunchly egalitarian partner, heave an envious sigh at the sight of my father sending my mother off for his slippers, his lunch, his sixth coffee in an hour. That said, I doubt Frank would be at all happy if he did suddenly find himself saddled with all those old "first sex privileges".

I don't think he realises how helpless my father feels in his deep culinary ignorance, how he panics when unforeseen events mean that he might have to put a ready-made meal into an oven all by himself, and how he does go hungry sometimes.

My mother, who was brought up to believe it was unladylike to talk back, is in the habit of expressing her displeasure by cooking fragrant micromenals: the more heinous the crime, the fewer mouthfuls he could expect.

I don't think Frank would like it if I did that to him. He would accuse me of trying to emasculate him, and he would be right. He does all the cooking in our house, partly to free me to do more work and earn more money. If I woke up tomorrow and told him that I had had enough of the workplace and wanted to devote myself to fetching his slippers and bringing toasted cheese sandwiches to his desk, he would be right to accuse me of letting the family down and thinking only of myself.

As my father could tell him, these first sex privileges don't come cheap. Frank belongs to the first generation of men who could get married without necessarily taking on a life-time dependent.

So no, feminism hasn't been all debit for the men of the world. The proof of its success is in the number of issues that used to be considered wild and radical hairy-leg brigade territory, but are now part of basic humanitarianism.

No decent man in this country believes, for example, that the police should turn a blind eye to husbands who beat their wives, or fathers who abuse their children. If a government came in with the proposal that we return to the good old days when women didn't fill out their own tax forms or hold their own bank accounts, most men would find it as laughable as women did.

But to say that attitudes have changed enough to make feminism obsolete, or that we have gone too far in the "other direction", is to misunderstand the problem. Culture, and not evil men acting in a conscious conspiracy, has made women socially inferior. The most dangerous sexism is not in male attitudes *per se*, but in the idea that one sex has to take precedence over the other, and in the institutional details worked out over generations by men who think men are the first sex.

It takes decades, perhaps even centuries to change these things. If there isn't a feminist impetus, it just won't happen. If there isn't a feminist watchdog, it's more than likely that we'll lose the rights we've already won. This is not because men are plotting to return us to the slot labelled "second sex", but because culture has a way of reverting to type.

Of course, most men I know assume that you can't be a feminist without believing all men are bastards. They think so because this was the sort of thing a lot of prominent feminists said — and meant — when the most recent movement began in the early Seventies. But the world was different then. There really were two separate domains in those days — the public one in which men dominated, and the private one in which female dependents held their own by cooking delicious, but very tiny, meals. Now both worlds are peopled by men and women.

As good as that might be for those of us who believe in equal rights, it creates new problems. The global economy has created a market place that never goes to sleep and gives no man or woman a job for life. How to bring up a family? Own a house? Have a life? These are questions that neither Professor von X nor feminism can address alone — but it is a mistake to suggest, as so many do today, that women have to stop calling themselves feminists before the real debate begins.

The day we can seriously consider putting feminism behind us, is the day when no man sees any point in arguing that we don't need it.

WARRIOR CASTE

Men and women don't seem to know how to read each other any more. We fail to recognise the signals, we don't know who should make the moves and so, too often, we're motoring on parallel tracks. But rather than trade insults or retreat, why not admit to our mutual vulnerability and need?

Playing "cool", a useless concept even when it was first coined in the Sixties, has a lot to answer for. The idea is even more pathetic now — recycled as an accessory to brown hipsters and Mondrian shirts. Cool is what passionate people do when they're hiding. It's immobilising, infuriating, and essentially solitary.

The problem today is not so much that men behave badly, but that they don't do anything at all. Cool has led to emotional immobility and a sexual stand-off that serves no one.

The Masai, considered by many to have "real men" qualities, would never behave in such a way. Warriors dance, sing, cry, show tenderness, laugh, fight a little (it's officially outlawed), talk a lot to their sweethearts, take care of their families and communities. They may look tough, but they are true gentlemen with perfect manners.

I know because I lived with Masai warriors and their families in East Africa, and carried on a long romance with one.

What did I find so refreshing? Openness, warmth, humour, and a complete lack of neurosis. As Gerald Hanley wrote in *Warriors and Strangers*, "A good definition of the ridiculous or the impossible would be a Masai on a psychiatrist's couch talking about his sex problems or any other problems."

Though certain taboos are observed, sex is guilt-free for both men and women. And though Masai society is patriarchal and polygamous, I found that women have a fair amount of power and sexual freedom. It is not uncommon for an ageing wife to consort with a warrior of her son's generation, as long as she is discreet.

Real warriors are also fearless. How can a girl fail to be impressed when her lover dashes off naked into the night to chase away noisy hyenas?

Western men, black or white, cannot import what these warriors have — it's not for the taking — but they can learn a few lessons from the boys in the bush.

It is a very tough act to follow. These men are attractive because they are "centred", self-assured without arrogance, knowing exactly where they stand in a society where roles are clear cut and young men have status as defenders of the realm.

These men are truly in touch with their bodies. The Masai don't play drums: they use their bodies to make music such as throaty singing. Then they channel the energy into making love, not war.

They are also unashamed to cry and get emotional. I've seen real warriors weep and shake when their mothers shave off their locks at the Eunoto ceremony, which marks the passage to adulthood. My boy friend said: "Crying is not a weakness — why should it be? It just shows you have sad thoughts."

Unlike British men who hang back when the going gets tough, these warriors defend their territory and their girlfriends. To my surprise, I rather liked it.

And they're actually great talkers, who communicate what they feel and think in a non-confrontational way — without dwelling on the past. Disputes in Masailand are settled by talking. When I asked my boyfriend what most disputes were about, he said: "Division of labour and passion."

Love is expressed freely. As my warrior later wrote: "I have been dreaming of you, then I decide to write... I love you, and will keep on loving you forever."



Real warriors weep: haircuts make them cry

LOTTE HUGHES

I.Q. of 145 and Can't Remember?

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A MAN'S PLACE

I do not make much of a lad, at the best of times. My attempts at blokeishness almost always end in tears. But there used to be places that a man could go to, and one or two things that he could do, which allowed him to live the illusion once in a while. But all that has changed and manhood stands, as it were, on the edge of extinction.

I used to go to football, once a fortnight. Unshaven, dressed in a sleeveless Union Jack T-shirt, I rugged on Woodbines and hurled abuse at foreign players. And then along came Nick Hornby, and Skinnier and Baddiel, and Anna Walker from Sky Sport. And suddenly football was a place for birds. And then girls. And then women. And then ladies. At first there were only a few — nudge, nudge, wink, wink. Don't like the look of yours much — but now there are rows and rows of them, singing and cheering and wearing the team colours. I have had to start shaving on Saturday mornings, as if I were going to a dinner party. I iron a shirt, dab on a spot of cologne and brush my hair. Tragic. Have you ever tried holding up a turnstile for a woman? If you can't spit, swear and smell bad, what can you do?

Women have begun to take part in every sphere of life that used to be reserved for males, and the result is that men are being repressed.

So I spark up a fat cigar to tap into that Churchill-Schwarzenegger-Castro side of myself — the bearded, war-winning Terminator that lies dormant for most of the day. And as I puff, I turn to the style pages to find that cigar-smoking is in the thing for women. That Demi Moore, Zoë Wamaker, Madonna, even Twiggy, are rarely seen without one. Twiggy? I do not stick a great big nasty Romeo Y Julieta No. 1 in my gob so that I can look like Twiggy.

Poker has not been the same since a woman called Gloria took £250 off me in a hand at the Victoria Casino on Edgware Road, and said, as she raked in the chips: "I've seen that play so often I felt like saying 'hello'." Pool comes into the same bracket. Pool clubs used to be badass places where you put the cash on the table, tossed a coin, then smashed your opponent. Now you get drinks for your girlfriend while she plays doubles with her mates, and the Hell's Angels queue quietly for a vacant table.

Nothing I do anymore, but nothing, marks me out as a man. The final word, after which I need say no more, is about nightclub lavatories. Women, identifying that the queues for the ladies are, for obvious reasons, much longer than those for the men's, have started brazenly flouting urinal convention.

"I need to pee just as much you, don't I?" said a young woman whom I challenged at the washbasins of a heaving nightclub. I suppose she did.

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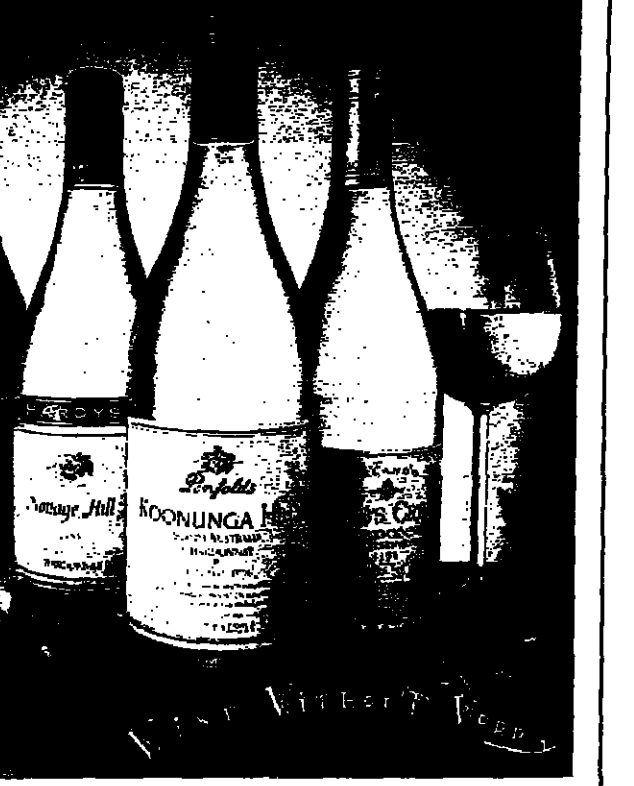
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John Major and the inevitability of appeasement

Alan Clark compares the Prime Minister to Neville Chamberlain

John Major wound up his best electoral performance since the 1992 campaign — the "informal" question and answer session on the stage at Bournemouth on Wednesday — with the assurance: "Next year... Same time, same place." Whether or not this undertaking can be met remains to be seen. Certainly it looks less unlikely than a week ago.

But I think it is no longer premature to essay a preliminary look at Mr Major's place in history. And, in particular, by a comparison with that of Neville Chamberlain, whose name — to the surprise of many at the time (five years ago) — Mr Major offered when asked to identify which of his predecessors he most admired.

Leaving aside for the moment their domestic achievements, there are remarkable similarities to their predicament. Each was faced with the problem of a European force which was rapidly growing in economic/military power and becoming annually more intrusive. The reality for both prime ministers was that Britain simply did not have the independent strength to ignore — still less defy — this force absolutely. Some kind of diplomatic accommodation needed to be reached. Yet each suffered from a section of their own party, and a tranche of the press, who saw the issues in grossly oversimplified terms and regarded any search for compromise as betrayal.

Chamberlain's geostrategic vision was clear — if cynical. The purpose of appeasement (at that time a perfectly respectable word) was to placate Germany in the West while tolerating — covertly if possible — the "adjustment" of territorial boundaries in the East which could, and should, have made a conflict between Russia and Germany inevitable.

Indeed it had been Chamberlain's predecessor, Baldwin, who, at a private meeting in 1934, four years before the Munich crisis, said that the best chance for Britain's survival lay in the two dictatorships ("the Huns and the Bolsheviks"), as he put it bleeding each other to death — or at least to impotence.

Mr Major has a similar assignment, in that patience and diplomatic guile are more likely to lead to the moderation of a force which — despite its inherent contradictions — looks ultimately to be profoundly menacing for British independence. If, or when, the European Union in its present form actually moves into a full federal structure with a single currency, the consequences should be clear to any unprejudiced observer. Social and economic imbalance, aggravated by bureaucratic incompetence and corruption, will rapidly bring about a situation which the Bundesbank cannot control.

Whether the German Government sees and acts on this before or after implosion takes place will be one of the conundrums of the next five years. But it will certainly be a situation, like the conflicts in eastern Europe in 1939, where Britain will be more comfortable as a spectator than as a participant.

Chamberlain had the advantage of a far larger parliamentary majority than Mr Major. Dissidents were fewer in number, nor were they popular, many of them, even in their own constituencies. Yet in the end, the pressures on Chamberlain were such that he had to enter into a series of pacts and regional alliances that were both impractical and dangerous.

In Mr Major's case he has suffered the additional vulnerability of a parliamentary majority so small that malcontents have been

able, often under a pretext that concealed their true, and frequently personal, motives, to disrupt business and exact concessions. And Mr Major, too, has been forced into the pretence, if not the substance, of seeking relationships with minor powers within the EU and apparently deluding himself with the notion that Britain was "speaking up for" the interests of the smaller continental nations. Like Chamberlain he has found himself compelled by the Foreign Office into a suppliant attitude to the French, whereas an earlier approach to establish a mutuality of interest with Germany would have been more soundly based.

But, also like Chamberlain, Mr Major enjoys a private realism border on the cynical. The principal threat, both to the country's equilibrium and to unity of the Tory party, is the approaching deadline for joining in the single currency. Mr Major's finesse is to keep Britain on the fringe, a benign spectator, while this wholly impractical and now largely cosmetic — if not actually fraudulent — scheme starts on its short and calamitous life.

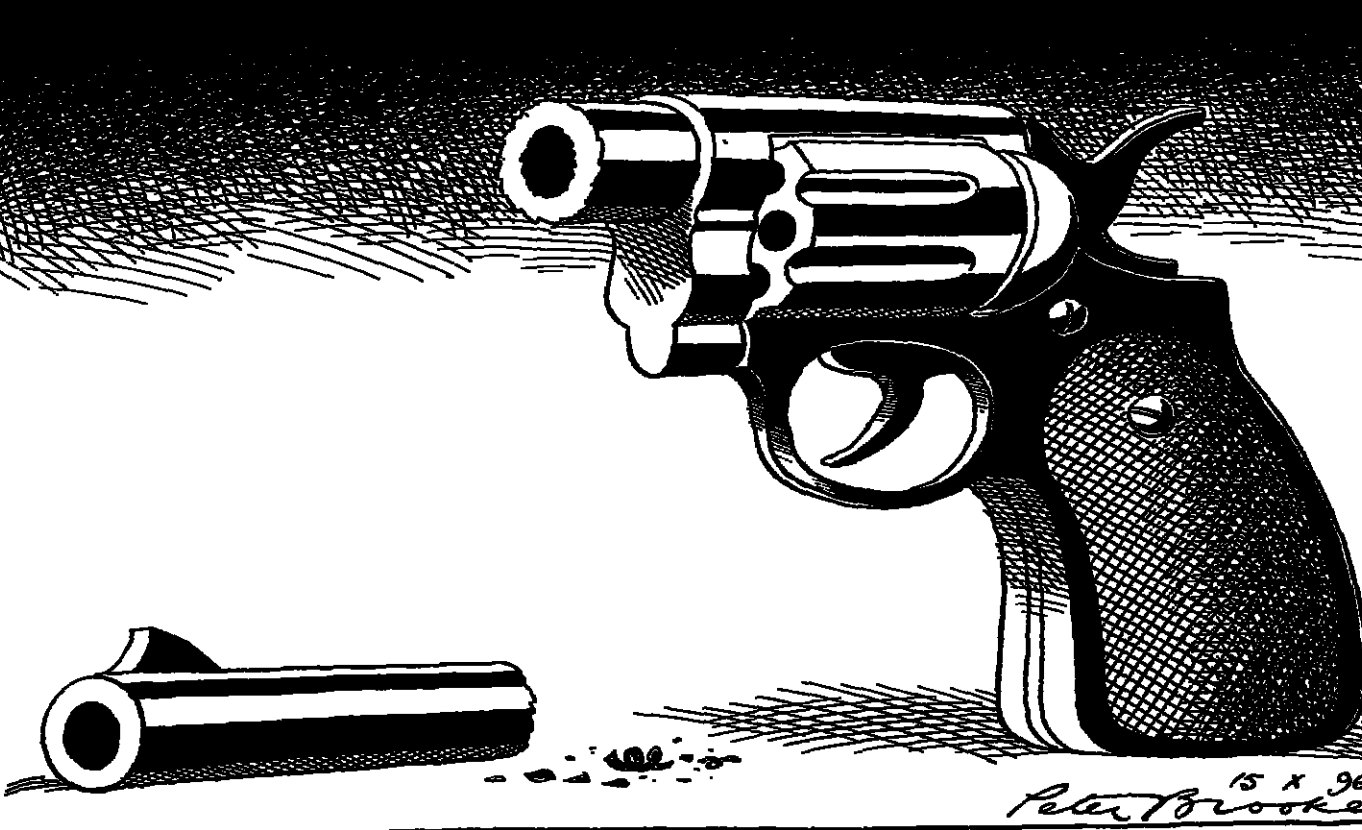
Even at its inception, the euro will be much weaker than the Swiss franc, the yen and the (existing) mark. Warning the convergence criteria and deliberate obfuscation of all that transparency of data which the Bundesbank had originally been promised, will ensure that the whole structure collapses. It is as inevitable — though one assumes without loss of life on the same scale — as the collision between Germany and Russia in 1941 which Neville Chamberlain had foreseen as relieving the pressure on Britain.

Nor do the similarities end here. As well as virulent dissent from within his own parliamentary party, the Prime Minister has had to contend with a political opposition that is shamelessly opportunistic. Just as the Labour Party in the 1930s was broadly pacifist, exploiting war weariness to oppose rearmament of any kind, so does it today pretend that "Europe" is no more than a source of additional benefit of "fairness" through the social chapter; and, through the European Court, of a benignly intrusive political correctness.

Just as in the 1930s, the electorate do not seem to care very much; or even to be capable of focusing on what is at stake. In party terms the dispute rages internally, and in the disputations of an intellectual elite. But, as in the 1940s, it will only assume real political significance when the electorate as a whole realises the extent to which they have been misled, and the damage they have suffered. This may yet be averted if Mr Major is allowed time to deploy his ingenious, though certainly unheroic, delaying tactics. (Just as one should remember that Chamberlain, although determined to avoid our declaring war and fighting on the mainland of Europe, did commission the eight-gun fighters, the Chain Home Radar system and much else to support our defence as an island.) At Bournemouth John Major said a revealing phrase: "I believe in the politics of reason." Let us hope for the country's sake that he is not rejected in favour of an individual whose policies are so redolent of the delusion that, to paraphrase Rab Butler, "politics is the art of the plausible".

Alan Clark's history of the Conservative Party from 1922-97, *Tories and the Nation State*, is to be published by Weidenfeld next autumn.

WARNING: HALF MEASURES WON'T WORK



The overinformation

We are weighed down with useless facts — but a remedy is at hand

A big hand now, please, for a new disease. Stepping into the limelight to take its first bow is the very latest fin-de-millennium malady: Information Fatigue Syndrome. This is brought on by having too many pieces of information on tap, owing to the global electronic revolution and the fact that for the first time in history it is faster to process and transmit information than to read it (in the days of the quill pen and the manual typewriter, people thought twice before making the effort).

The disease has everything a modern ailment demands: panic attacks, palpitations, chronic exhaustion, joint pains, something called "e-mail rage", and sufferers prepared to testify that it took them five years' complete rest to get better. It can only be a matter of time before a celebrity succumbs in a public place, a pressure group is formed and poor Dr Stutford gets howled at again on the *Rantzen Report*.

Excellent, keep it coming, all this needs saying. Knowledge is power but information can be disabling. A report published this week says that one in four people get ill as a result of having too much information. It costs British industry 30 million lost working days a year, or £2 billion. There you are, another statistic to make you feel even worse. Unfortunately, 85 per cent of the UK managers also said that they needed the information; as long as the stuff is out there somewhere, they want it, even if it makes them poorly.

The psychologist Dr David Lewin extends this gloomy dilemma wider: "Professional and personal survival in modern society," he says, "clearly depends on our ability to take on board amounts of new information. Yet that information is growing at an exponential rate." He cites the old chestnut that a weekday edition of *The New York Times* contains more information than a 17th-century man or woman would have come across in a lifetime; and points out that the sheer strain of wondering what we should know, and where it is, means that we make stupid decisions and throw our bodies into a primitive "flight-or-flight" response. Brain chemicals command us to put a fist through the computer screen or run away and climb a tree; instead we have to stay

passively hunched over our reports, brochures, memos, manuals, graphs, tables and printouts, letting them eat us. And we get ill.

Even Sunday at home becomes threatening. Just when we are getting to grips with EMU or Sir Gordon Downey, we are distracted by being told which headlineless shampoos contain organophosphates, that haddock may become extinct any minute, and that they have changed the rules on private pensions again. And that is before professional worries begin: in my handbag I have been carrying

show their cultural breadth by singing cod Gilbert-and-Sullivan doggerel which doesn't even scan (a terrible cry went up in this house during Mrs Bottomley's rendition of her anti-Blair conference song: "If this is Heritage, give me the mess of pottage!"). We can't all be good at everything; it is worth quoting correctly, for once, Pope's much misused lines:

"A little learning is a dangerous thing,
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring.

There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain
And drinking largely sobers us again."

Given that the Pierian spring is now poured unremittingly over our heads 24 hours a day, there are two cures for information overload: one immediate and practical, the other touching on a trouble so deep that it will take longer.

The quick fix is obvious: erect filters. This takes determination. Zoologically, we are programmed to be distracted by everything. A wildebeest would not last long if it were too busy eating to notice the fresh lion-droppings round the waterhole. We instinctively swivel to every stimulus, but this must stop. Blind eyes must be cultivated, pages turned, choices made.

In the business world, growing services provide business people with terse one-page newsletters on selected items. Internet servers offer ever more sophisticated search facilities (though a correspondent of this paper claims to have been looking for "zen" and got all sex senior citizens). That's his story and he's sticking to it. Businesses should make a priority of setting up filtering systems, and discourage e-mail abuse. For the rest of us, it is notable that the publishing success of the year is *The Week*, a 30-page digest of British and foreign media done with wit, a genius for précis and such comforting headings as "Boring but impor-

tant". In a year it has come from a garage office and 1,000 subscribers to more than 10,000. It provides a fine security blanket for those who get anxious about missing things.

With self-discipline and such aids, filtering is possible and real experience again becomes visible over the mound of information. But now the difficult bit: if we are not to try and know everything, we have to trust other people to. But while information is a glut commodity, trust has never been scarcer. The alarming slide in the reputation of public service in general and Parliament in particular is something that government has done remarkably little to halt, not even bothering to enforce the register of MPs' interests. Trust in professionals crumbles apace: government accelerated this process through years of viciously insulting teachers, clergy, and public services. And who really trusts banks, since BCCI and Barings? Or IMRO, which gave the Maxwell pension schemes a clean bill of health?

In medicine, mutual trust is threatened by spiralling litigation. In commerce, it is crushed between marketplace ethics and aggressive consumer rights movements. We are unsure of what is in our food. In employment, casualisation and weasel contracts make it foolish to trust your employer or your employee. Everyone watches their back, all the time.

But to do this you need a lot of information, too much to take in and still get your own job done. Panic is never far from the most ordinary aspects of life. Come now — do you really understand how your PEP works? Or did you just choose it because you liked the logo of the Mutual Equitable and Hardy At All Dugdy Investment Trust?

That, really, is the problem. Society is very complicated now. Unless we restore trust in one another and in the professions, the outlook is grim. We will all chase so many facts that we lose our grip and enter a dark age of rumour. Unless we each drink deeper at our own well of learning, and trust those at the adjacent springs, we shall grow even less good at making rational decisions. The field will be left to snake-oil merchants, soothsayers with blue plastic pyramids and foxily eloquent journalists. Nightmare.

President of Ecuador, and currently bespreading his native pop charts with his single "The Madman in Love".

Members of the Romanian National Opera currently touring Britain have had a new clause inserted in their contract: any excess baggage will have to be paid for. The rule change follows a mammoth shopping spree enjoyed by the 200-strong company the last time it toured here. On that occasion an additional pantechon had to be hired to take their purchases home to Bucharest. Among the notable

items which they bought were two cement mixers.

NO ONE is happier for Damon Hill than the members of the London Rowing Club, whose blue and white colours he wears on his helmet as his father did before him. Last week the club sent out a consignment of eight of their caps to the Williams team mechanics who wore them in the pits on Sunday as Hill clinched his world title.

Graham Hill had been a successful oarsman for the club while Hill Jr., though not known for his sculling, is an honorary member. "We were delighted to see our colours victorious off the water as well as on," said Nigel Smith, club secretary. "We will be raising a glass to Damon at our club dinner."

Asked by Good Housekeeping to name their husbands' most annoying characteristic both Hillary Rodham Clinton and Elizabeth Dole came up with the same one: channel-hopping. "Like most men, my husband is an avid channel surfer," said the First Lady. Mrs Dole was more blunt: "Bob and I enjoy watching television together in the evenings, but he always channel-surfs. It drives me nuts."

Damon needs another P45. He's spilt champagne over the one we gave him.

P.H.S

Sleaze: a bad new wheeze

Labour's smears will backfire, says Woodrow Wyatt

So Labour and the Lib Dems have made a pact jointly to hurl sleaze accusations at the Government and Tory MPs. That makes a change. In April, at the Staffordshire South East by-election, the Lib Dems bitterly attacked Labour for its smear campaign against their candidate.

For Labour, sleaze is a cover to divert attention from the emptiness and obscurity of its somersaulting policies and promises. For the Lib Dems, it is a publicity stunt to cash in on the addition to their ranks of Peter Thurnham, the member for Bolton North East. Mr Thurnham's majority of 185 in 1992 was further threatened by a boundary change. But for Mr Major — who, to general surprise, won the election and carried to victory Tory candidates who otherwise would have been defeated — Mr Thurnham would not have held his seat. This man of principle was looking for a safe Tory seat. With a house in Westmorland and Lonsdale, he thought he would be onto a good thing to succeed the retiring Michael Jopling, whose majority was a healthy 16,000. Mr Thurnham thought Central Office support was his due. But did not even ask him to attend an interview. Officially they said that, at 58, he was too old and they wanted someone younger. Privately, they thought little of him.

Thurnham was enraged and mysteriously blamed Mr Major, with whom (together with his wife) he had an interview before he announced last February that he would no longer take the Tory whip. If Westmorland had adopted him he would still be rooting for Major. Set on revenge, he timed his announcement for the end of last week's party conference, intending to damage Mr Major's spectacular success. Mr Thurnham said he could no longer bear the sleaze among Tory MPs and the Prime Minister's failure to deal with it.

It is possible to question his sincerity, though his wife's loss of enthusiasm for baking cakes for Tory functions sounds genuine. His claim that a knightship was hinted at to keep him quiet is fantasy. Knightships are never given to Tory MPs so briefly and unreliably in the Commons.

Chief cheerleader for the Lib-Lab aim to make sleaze a big issue at next May's election is *The Guardian*. It has made use, whether accurately or not, of documents lodged with the court in the collapsed Hamilton libel case. If these documents are the only source of the allegations, then *The Guardian* would appear to have committed contempt of court. It hopes the appropriate legal authorities will now investigate.

Targeting sleaze is a dangerous game, running the risk of a boomerang. When Tony Blair was a shadow minister he accepted, through the offices of the now notorious Ian Greer acting for businessmen opposing a Washington Unitary Tax, a free return trip to the United States on Concorde. He did not declare the expenses of his visit in the Members Register of Interests. When this was referred to the Committee of Privileges, whipped Labour MPs walked out before he could be censured. Now the complaint is that David Willetts, a former whip, offered advice to Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, Privileges Committee chairman, when the Hamilton affair came before it. *Tu quoque*.

The Lib-Lab messianism complained yesterday that the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, Sir Gordon Downey, lacks the resources and a wide enough remit to investigate the Hamilton affair. Downing Street has promised him full documentation and any extra staff he may need to report quickly. Was it sleaze when John Prescott, whom I like, got into violent conflict with Customs for his omission to declare dutiable goods? Mr Blair thought Baroness Turner of Camden's directorship of Ian Greer's strange outfit, and her defence of its practices, looked like sleaze and promptly removed her from the Opposition front bench in the Lords. But the facts had been known for a long time, so why not act sooner?

Along with the legislatures of Scandinavia and the old Commonwealth, ours is the least corrupt. But always some will fall. John Stonehouse, once a Labour minister, sensationally did it and went to prison. He had conspired with his mistress, Sheila Buckley, to fake his disappearance while swimming to enable them to live on money stolen from his own companies. Australian police arrested him thinking he was the missing Lord Lucan.

I disagree with the popular view that politicians are only in it for themselves. They usually suffer from Milton's "last infirmity of noble mind" (longing for fame) on all sides there is a deep sense of service and duty. Mounting a sleaze campaign against the Tories' Hackens Parliament, as the Speaker complained yesterday, and is another cause of my disillusion with Tony Blair, who I thought was above defiling himself with pith-

Party Whirl

CONFUSION hangs over the organisation of this weekend's Referendum Party thrash in Brighton. In public, the Cocktail Party is putting on a show of languid confidence. Try working out the plan for the conference, however, and what emerges instead is a picture of gilded inertia.

Start with Friday night's entertainments. First, a Referendum Rave was planned and then called off as seeming too frivolous. What is left is a round of dinners in Brighton's Grand Hotel. The hottest ticket had seemed to be Lady

Powell's. This most expansive of political hostesses, the wife of Baroness Thatcher's former adviser Sir Charles Powell, was quickest off the mark.

Now it emerges that not only will Sir James Goldsmith be spending most of his evening shackled up with his candidates rather than with Lady Powell's dinner guests as had been expected, but there is a new entrant to the field: Lord McAlpine.

McAlpine, having come late to the party, wants to throw a dinner on the Friday night, but has found

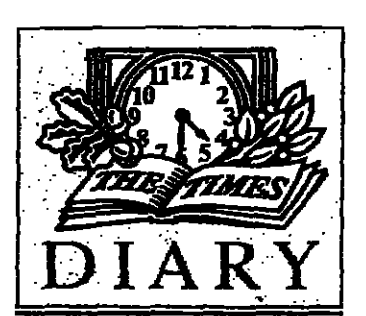
that all his prospective guests have already been snaffled up. So a compromise has been reached. McAlpine explains: "Jimmy's doing the candidates. Lady Powell is doing the pundits and I've got the rest of the press. No big gathering later on, just a few drinks and bed I should think."

Cake talk

THE Tory backlash against Peter Thurnham, defective MP for Bolton North East, is turning nasty with his local Conservative association accusing his wife of lying about her baking habits. Yesterday, Sarah Thurnham claimed in this newspaper that she has baked "hundreds of cakes" for the Conservative Party over the years earning little reward for her husband in the process.

John Walsh, an officer and former chairman of Bolton North East Conservatives, claims never to have clapped eyes on Mrs Thurnham, let alone chewed on her Dundee cake. "She did not deliver a single cake to association events the whole time I was there," he insists. Taking the argument onto the high ground, he adds: "The only cake of hers I ever sampled was one she made to thank us after the general election year back in 1987."

Padre Pio had his stigmata, the Devil his t66, but for Liberal Dem-



ocrat MPs the mark is a black bruise under the third fingernail of the right hand. As Paddy Ashdown showed off Peter Thurnham, MP, over the weekend, he noticed that his newest recruit shared this same distinguishing feature. Ashdown said that he came by his black spot when he trapped his digit in a car door. Thurnham was caused by an aggressive filing cabinet.

Font fun

QUITO will be the scene of one of the more exotic Catholic ceremonies tomorrow as Silvana Ibarra, Ecuador's leading pop-singer, has her first born christened. The child's godmother will be Lorena Bobbitt, amateur surgeon, and a close schoolfriend of Ibarra before leaving Ecuador for America and her fatherly marriage. His godfather will be Abdala Bucaram, former Olympic hurdler.

President of Ecuador, and currently bespreading his native pop charts with his single "The Madman in Love".

Members of the Romanian National Opera currently touring Britain have had a new clause inserted in their contract: any excess baggage will have to be paid for. The rule change follows a mammoth shopping spree enjoyed by the 200-strong company the last time it toured here. On that occasion an additional pantechon had to be hired to take their purchases home to Bucharest. Among the notable

items which they bought were two cement mixers.

NO ONE is happier for Damon Hill than the members of the London Rowing Club, whose blue and white colours he wears on his helmet as his father did before him. Last week the club sent out a consignment of eight of their caps to the Williams team mechanics who wore them in the pits on Sunday as Hill clinched his world title.

Graham Hill had been a successful oarsman for the club while Hill Jr., though not known for his sculling, is an honorary member. "We were delighted to see our colours victorious off the water as well as on," said Nigel Smith, club secretary. "We will be raising a glass to Damon at our club dinner."

Damon needs another P45. He's spilt champagne over the one we gave him.

P.H.S



Lady Powell and Lord McAlpine: dividing the workload

هكذا من الأصل

Mean Machine makes up ground on leading team



THE gap at the top of *The Times* Interactive Team Football overall competition has narrowed. Mr J. Staszewicz, from Ramsey, Isle of Man, remains the leader, but with only three points separating his team, NST Monkstone, from the second-placed Mean Machine, the first enforced mid-season break — due to international matches — has not done him any favours.

The weekly winner is Mr D. Mathieson, from Whitehaven, with his team I Ate Yorkshire. Mr Mathieson might be languishing in 129.37th place in the overall competition, but with 36 points this week, he gains the £250 prize. Mr Mathieson's team is:

Goalkeeper
G Marshall (Celtic)

Full backs
L Dixon (Arsenal)
M Jackson (Everton)

Central defenders
T Boyd (Celtic)
S Campbell (Tottenham)

Midfield players
D Beckham (Manchester Utd)
R Fox (Tottenham)
V Jones (Wimbledon)
R Wallace (Leeds)

Strikers
E Bo Andersen (Rangers)
G Stuart (Everton)

Manager
R Aitken (Aberdeen)

It is early days, but if your team could be doing better,



Ian Wright scored twice for Arsenal on Saturday. He is the leading striker in ITF, having notched up 26 points.



you can move into the transfer market to improve your fortunes. You can use the ITF transfer system which allows

you to change up to two players each week and to adjust your team if one of your players is actually transferred out of the FA Carling Premiership or Bell's Scottish League premier division.

You can make transfers only by telephone. Using a Touch-tone (DTMF) telephone (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-tone), call the 0891 866 968 line during the times given. From outside the United Kingdom, you must call 0044 990 200 668.

When making a transfer, you must ensure that the team does not contain more than two individuals (two players or one player and a manager) from the same club.

If you are lagging behind the leading team selectors, the transfer system will be an appealing option to you in the chase for the prizes — the overall £50,000, monthly £1,000 or weekly £250.

□ All Interactive Team Football transfer queries should be directed to 0171-757 7016. All other inquiries can be made on 01582 488 122.

HOW THE SCORING SYSTEM WORKS IN ITF

All 1996-7 matches in the FA Carling Premiership, FA Cup, Bell's Scottish League premier division and Tynes Scottish Cup from August 17 count for points. Penalty shootouts do not count but results decided in this way will count for managers.

POINTS SCORED

Goalkeeper: Keeps clean sheet* 4pts, Saves penalty 3pts, Full back/Central defender: Keeps clean sheet* 3pts, Scores goal 1pt, Midfield player: Keeps clean sheet* 1pt, Scores goal 2pts

POINTS DEDUCTED

Goalkeeper: Concedes goal 2pts, Full back/Central defender: Concedes goal 1pt, All players: All players 3pts, Booked 1pt, Concedes penalty 1pt, Misses penalty 1pt, Scores own goal 1pt, Manager: Manager 1pt, Team losses 1pt

* Must have played for 75 minutes in the match (must have played for 45 minutes in the match)

HOW TO MAKE A TRANSFER IN ITF

Call 0891 866 968

If telephoning from outside the United Kingdom call 44 990 200 668.

You may make transfers only by telephone using a Touch-tone (DTMF) telephone (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-tone). You will need your ten-digit selector PIN, which you will have to tap in, not speak. Follow the simple instructions and tap in the five-digit codes of the players you are transferring.

You may only make transfers in one team per telephone call. If you have entered two teams and want to make transfers in both, you must make two separate calls.

You may transfer two (but no more than two) individuals (two players or one player and a manager) during a transfer week. A player being transferred out must be replaced by one from the same category and you must keep to the team format of a goalkeeper, two full backs, two central defenders, four midfield players, two strikers and a manager. You must not exceed the £25 million budget and have no more than two individuals from the same club. Incorrect transfers will be rejected and your team will remain in its previous form.

The transfer week runs from 00.01 on Tuesday to midnight the following Monday. Transfers made before noon each day will become effective immediately. Transfers made after noon will become effective for matches played after noon on the following day.

Your new player only starts to score points for you when his transfer is registered. The current score of the player transferred out remains part of your team score but he then ceases to score for you.

If a player or manager moves teams during the season, it may affect the composition of your team. You must adjust your team by using the transfer system to avoid missing out on points.

Calls will be charged at 45p per minute cheap rate, 50p per minute at other times. Calls made from public telephones may cost approximately twice as much.

THIS WEEK'S TRANSFERS				
IN	MOVED	OUT	LOANED PLAYERS	
42911...	Eyal Berkovic	Southampton	£1,00m	
30303...	Paul McGrath	Derby County	£2.5m	
51903...	John Hendrie	Middlesbrough	£0.75m	
E McGoldrick (from Arsenal to Manchester City, one week), M Taylor (Derby to Crewe, one week), D Vissani (Derby to Manchester City, one month), C Holland (Newcastle to Birmingham, two weeks), S Argill (Sunderland to Shrewsbury, one week), T Wright (Nottingham Forest to Reading, two weeks), R van der Laan (Derby to Wolverhampton, one month), S Fitzgerald (Wimbledon to Millwall, one month). Loan periods subject to sanction.				

THE LEADING 250 ENTRIES IN THE TIMES INTERACTIVE TEAM FOOTBALL GAME

Pts	Team	(Player's name)	Pts
1	NST Monkstone	(J Staszewicz)	188
2	Sophie And Sam	(G Foster)	185
3	John Hunt Taunton F	(A Burton)	181
4	Skyforest	(J Hunt)	178
5	John Hunt Taunton D	(P Ford)	178
6	Mean Machine	(T Feehly)	178
7	Plastic Fries 10	(M Jones)	177
8	James Boys Three	(A Loan)	177
9	Gangsters	(J Hunt)	175
10	John Hunt Taunton H	(G P Dolan)	175
11	Noah's Ark	(J Hunt)	174
12	John Hunt Taunton E	(P Mills)	174
13	Storm	(N Karyn)	173
14	Blaze United	(P Foster)	173
15	Beyond Fault	(P Tustler)	173
16	Pin Ups Two	(D Tulip)	173
17	Tulip's Tops	(J Brown)	172
18	Nobby 5	(H Rimmer)	172
19	Hopeful Hotshots	(K J Burns)	171
20	1st Elf	(D Thompson)	171
21	Flying Foreigners	(S Howes)	170
22	Brain's Team	(J Brown)	169
23	Nobby 20	(J Brown)	169
24	Henning Berg Kick 1	(J Brown)	169
25	La Bouffes	(J Brown)	169
26	Arrogant FC	(J Brown)	169
27	Thompson's XI	(G Thompson)	169
28	Tom Foolery FC	(M Moran)	169
29	Beyond Care	(P Foster)	169
30	4 4 2	(K Brown)	168
31	Caroline B	(A Luckhurst)	168
32	Sky Times III	(J Brown)	168
33	Beaston Celtic	(G McGivern)	167
34	Nobby 34	(J Brown)	167
35	Nobby 33	(J Brown)	167
36	Purple Rain	(G Gohli)	167
37	Expensive Failures	(S Harper)	166
38	Lesley's Legmen	(L Michaelis)	166
39	Wether's Wanderers	(D Wetherall)	166
40	Athletic Storm	(P Mills)	166
41	Deggors	(V Cox)	166
42	School For Goals	(K Booth)	166
43	Set Against Cys	(S Shipley)	165
44	Former Champions	(A Murhaban)	165
45	La Bouff 2nd Veg	(M Sawley)	165
46	Where's Ray Gone?	(P Fromm)	164
47	PJ Thistle	(R Newbould)	164
48	Friends 36	(J Fyfe)	164
49	Hull Red Devils	(G Foster)	164
50	Ginger FC	(C Armstrong)	164
51	AB 4	(A Boyland)	164
52	Sky Times On Toast	(N Sawley)	164
53	T 20	(T Bessan)	164
54	Rolands Raiders	(P M Handley)	164
55	Evergreen On Judas F	(N Hix)	164
56	Nobby	(M Corless)	163
57	Dour Rangers 3	(J Clayton)	163
58	Jenny's Skates	(D S Mills)	163
59	Rapid Vipers	(M Forrest)	163
60	Crouch End Rovers	(M Mitchell)	163
61	Ref Is Back To Kill	(J Gohli)	163
62	Airist	(J Fyfe)	162
63	Down And Out	(J Carruthers)	162
64	Kanther's Cronies	(E D Kanler)	162
65	Classical At Me	(P Naylor)	162
66	Burch Girls	(M Burch)	161
67	Dynamo Hibs	(S Miller)	161
68	I	(M Corless)	161
69	It's About Revenge C	(R Gohli)	161

FIND OUT HOW YOUR TEAM IS DOING

Call the ITF hotline on 0891 866 643. Outside UK 44 990 200 343.

Check your points total and your ranking. You need a Touch-tone (DTMF) telephone (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-tone) and your ten-digit selector PIN. Calls made from public telephones may cost approximately twice as much.

Pts	Team	(Player's name)	Pts
107	AC Fantasy FC	(M Skippin)	158
107	Wolfeaton Wolves	(D Power)	158
107	Allen XI	(A Dismil)	158
107	Smelly Wellies XI	(A Shabir)	158
107	Carless Whisper	(L Geary)	158
107	R and N Flashboys	(R Brown)	158
107	Lessons One	(M Price)	158
107	Give Chester!	(K J Burns)	157
107	ALP	(K Farhall)	157
107	Rigby's Roasters	(A Rigby)	157
107	The Foreign Legion	(A Cheung)	157
107	Jaywalkers	(D Ashton)	157
107	Champs Elect	(C Potter)	157
107	Joe's Hotshots	(L Spencer)	157
107	Perfecto Allstars	(N Howe)	157
107	Ashley FC	(L A Taylor)	157
107	Barry's Team	(S Matthews)	157
107	Hede Yuck Spilt	(J Roberts)	157
107	Wivro	(G Atkinson)	156
107	Best Of The Best	(R Ruzarska)	156
107	Bacon Sandwich	(D L Davis)	156
107	Over The Moon FC	(I Roscall)	156
107	Smyth's Stinkies	(M Jack)	156
107	Clover Vale	(G Hinds)	156
107	Def Men Can Manage	(R E H Tunciliffe)	156
107	Ginger	(T P Leah)	156
107	Sitting Ducks	(A Pano)	156
107	God's Allrounders 2	(S A Godfrey)	156
107	Raj Is Back To Kill	(R Gohli)	156
107	Waleska's Team	(N Grogan)	156
107	Blue Stars	(M Broonhall)	156
107	Inter Jakes FC	(S A Jakes)	156
107	Toto Calcio	(A Daye)	156
107	Oct95-ITF Champ	(M Sladden)	156
107	Equinox Eagles	(S Abbott)	156
107	Golden 11	(H Kar)	156
107	Brill XI	(A P Howard)	156
107	Sligo Slouches	(L Mills)	156
107	Chiefs' Crusier Gang	(R Segar)	156
107	Fowler's Fury	(S Giddin)	156
107	Hutton Hobnobs	(B Byrnes)	156
107	GR Team II	(P Sheridan)	156
107	Foreign Legion	(S Brook)	156
107	Boscombe A	(K Rowling)	156
107	Hazza's Dream Team	(M Jones)	156
107	Rod's Rovers	(P Thornton)	156
107	Rodents Rovers	(N Reale)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(M Daniels)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(G Gardiner)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(J Brown)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(C Scarlett)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(C D Woodward)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(P Bodley)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(R Horsler)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(G Fox)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(P O'Connell)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(M Roper)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(S Roddam)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(J Scott)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(J McCallion)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(K McGuire)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(J Harle)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(C C Vickers)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(M O'Brien)	156
107	Unl Boys Ltd 1	(K Booth)	156

ENTER TIMES ITF BY TELEPHONE — THERE ARE BIG PRIZES TO BE WON EVERY WEEK AND EVERY MONTH

The Manager of the Week and the Manager of the Month are up for grabs from now until the end of the season. You could be a winner of either by entering a team today. The Manager of the Week or Month can be won by any team no matter where it is in the league, the prize for the Manager of the Week or Month simply goes to the person whose team scores the highest points in any one week or month.

The prize for the Manager of the Week is £250 cash, plus a £250 Sports Gift Voucher for an amateur football team in your community — as nominated by you. The Manager of the Month will receive £1,000 cash.

You can still be a big winner in ITF. To enter today, just follow the instructions below.

Enter ITF by phone on 0891 405 011

If telephoning from outside the United Kingdom, call 44 990 100 320

1. You must use a Touch-tone (DTMF) telephone (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-tone).
2. Choose 1 goalkeeper, 2 full backs, 2 central defenders, 4 midfielders, 2 strikers and a manager.
3. Do not spend more than £35 million.
4. Do not choose more than two individuals (2 players or 1 player and 1 manager) from any one football club.
5. Once you have chosen your team, call the entry line, above, and follow these step-by-step instructions.

a) You must tap in (not speak) the full set of selections (using the five-digit player codes) for each of your 11 chosen players and your manager.

b) You must speak the name of your team (no more than 16 characters) your name, address, with postcode, and daytime telephone number.

c) Finally, you will be given a ten-digit personal identification number (PIN) at the end of the call. You must keep a note of this number and your chosen team as no postal notification will be sent.



See Sky Text, page 118

0891 calls cost 45p per minute cheap rate and 50p per minute at all other times. Your call will cost approximately double if made from a pay phone. In the event of there being more than one Manager of the Week or Month, the winner will be chosen at random. All ITF rules apply, a copy of which will be made available on request.

The ITF players, their points and their values if you are considering the transfer option

Code	Name	Team	Em	Pts	Wk	Ch
10101	M Watt	Aberdeen	1.50	0	-3	
10102	N Walker	Aberdeen	1.00	+5	+5	
10201	D Seaman	Arsenal	5.00	+5	+21	
10202	V Bartram	Arsenal	0.75	0	-8	
10203	J Lukic	Arsenal	0.75	0	-8	
10301	M Bosnich	Aston Villa	3.50	-2	-2	
10302	M Oakes	Aston Villa	1.00	0	+6	
10401	T Flowers	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	-3	-13	
10402	S Given	Blackburn Rovers	2.00	0	0	
10501	G Marshall	Celtic	0.75	+2	-1	
10601	D Klaine	Celtic	2.50	0	+10	
10602	K Hitchcock	Celtic	2.00	-1	-11	
10701	S Ogrizovic	Coventry City	1.50	-1	-16	
10702	J Flan	Coventry City	0.50	0	0	
10801	M Taylor	Derby County	1.00	0	0	
10802	R Hout	Derby County	1.00	-1	-5	
10901	A Maxwell	Dundee United	0.50	+5	0	
10902	L Key	Dundee United	0.50	0	0	
11001	N Westwater	Dunfermline	0.50	0	-18	
11101	J Keaton	Everton	2.50	-1	-1	
11102	P Gerrard	Everton	0.50	0	0	
11201	G Rousset	Hartlepool	2.50	0	-17	
11301	J Leighton	Hibernian	1.50	0	+6	
11401	D Lekovic	Kilmarnock	1.00	+5	+21	
11501	M Beesley	Leeds United	1.50	0	0	
11502	P Evans	Leeds United	0.25	0	0	
11503	N Martin	Leeds United	2.50	+5	-5	
11601	K Poole	Leeds United	1.00	0	0	
11602	K Keller	Leeds United	1.00	0	0	
11701	D James	Liverpool	5.00	-1	+11	
11702	A Warner	Liverpool	0.50	0	0	
11801	P Schmeichel	Manchester United	5.00	+5	+11	
11802	R van der Gouw	Manchester United	1.00	0	+5	
11901	C Wiles	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	0	
11902	A Miller	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	-14	
12001	S Howie	Motherwell	1.50	0	0	
12101	S Hlop	Newcastle United	4.00	0	-3	
12102	P Smitcek	Newcastle United	3.00	+5	+4	
12201	M Crossley	Nottingham Forest	2.50	-3	-15	
12202	A Pettis	Nottingham Forest	0.75	0	0	
12301	T Phelan	Nottingham Forest	0.75	0	0	
12302	S Thomson	Rangers	0.50	-1	-20	
12401	A Goram	Rangers	5.00	-3	+13	
12501	K Pressman	Sheffield Wednesday	2.50	-1	-10	
12601	D Beasant	Southampton	1.00	0	-10	
12602	N Moss	Southampton	0.25	-1	-2	
12701	L Perez	Sunderland	0.50	0	0	
11803	A Colton	Sunderland	1.00	0	+12	
12901	I Waller	Tottenham Hotspur	3.50	+5	+10	
12902	L Mikosko	Tottenham Hotspur	0.50	0	+5	
12903	S Mautone	West Ham United	1.00	0	+5	
13001	N Sullivan	Wimbledon	1.00	-2	-8	
13002	P Heald	Wimbledon	1.00	0	0	



Alan Shearer has been in prime form recently. With 21 points in ITF to his credit, can you afford to leave him out?

Code	Name	Team	Em	Pts	Wk	Ch
30304	C Tiler	Aston Villa	1.00	0	0	
30305	R Selmes	Aston Villa	1.00	0	0	
30401	C Hendry	Blackburn Rovers	4.00	0	-1	
30402	I Pearce	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0	-1	
30403	C Coleman	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0	-3	
30404	N Markler	Blackburn Rovers	0.50	-1	+3	
30501	T Boyd	Celtic	3.00	+4	+6	
30502	M Mackay	Celtic	1.50	0	+3	
30503	A Stubbs	Celtic	3.50	+4	+4	
30601	M Duberry	Celtic	4.50	0	-1	
30602	F Leboeuf	Celtic	2.50	-1	+20	
30603	F Leboeuf	Celtic	2.00	0	0	
30604	D Lee	Celtic	2.00	0	0	
30605	A Myers	Celtic	1.50	-1	+8	
30606	E Johnson	Celtic	1.50	0	+13	
30607	J Keldbjerg	Celtic	0.50	0	0	
30701	M Delah	Coventry City	1.00	0	-1	
30702	R Shaw	Coventry City	1.50	0	-5	
30703	D Busst	Coventry City	1.00	0	0	
30801	P McGrath	Derby County	2.50	0	0	
30802	I Sillam	Derby County	2.50	0	+1	
30803	D Wassall	Derby County	1.00	0	0	
30804	J Laursen	Derby County	1.00	0	+5	
30901	S Pressley	Derby County	0.50	0	0	
31001	M Miller	Dunfermline	0.75	-4	-2	
31002	I den Bieman	Dunfermline	0.75	-2	-5	
31101	D Unsworth	Everton	2.50	0	+7	
31102	D Watson	Everton	2.50	0	0	
31103	C Short	Everton	2.00	0	+6	
31201	D McPherson	Hartlepool	1.00	0	-2	
31202	R Johnson	Hartlepool	2.50	+4	+2	
31301	J McLaughlin	Hibernian	0.50	0	0	
31302	B Welsh	Hibernian	0.75	0	+9	
31401	G Hunter	Hibernian	0.50	-2	+3	
31402	R Montgomerie	Kilmarnock	1.00	0	-3	
31501	P Wetherill	Leeds United	2.50	+4	+3	
31502	R Johnson	Leeds United	2.00	0	0	
31503	L Radebe	Leeds United	1.00	+4	+1	
31504	J Pemberton	Leeds United	0.50	0	0	
31601	S Walsh	Leeds United	1.00	-2	+3	
31602	J Watts	Leeds United	1.00	0	+9	
31603	P Kamaark	Leeds United	0.50	0	0	
31604	S Prior	Leeds United	1.00	-2	+2	
31701	J Scallan	Liverpool	3.50	0	0	
31702	J Scallan	Liverpool	3.50	0	0	
31703	M Wright	Liverpool	3.50	0	+11	
31704	N Ruddock	Liverpool	3.00	0	0	
31705	D Matteo	Liverpool	1.00	0	+12	
31801	G Pallister	Manchester United	3.50	0	+14	
31802	D May	Manchester United	3.00	+3	+13	
31803	A Nelson	Manchester United	1.50	0	0	
31901	P Pearson	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	-1	
31902	S Vickers	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	-2	
31903	D Whyte	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	-5	
31904	P Whelan	Middlesbrough	0.75	0	-1	
32001	B Martin	Motherwell	1.50	0	+7	
32002	M van der Gaag	Motherwell	0.75	0	+11	
32101	P Albert	Newcastle United	4.50	+4	+4	
32102	S Howie	Newcastle United	1.00	0	0	
32103	D Peacock	Newcastle United	3.00	+4	+6	
32201	C Cooper	Nottingham Forest	3.00	-2	-3	
32202	S Chellie	Nottingham Forest	2.50	0	0	
32301	S Dennis	Rangers	1.00	-12	-12	
32401	R Gough	Rangers	3.50	-1	+19	
32402	A MacLennan	Rangers	3.00	0	0	
32403	B Kirkland	Rangers	3.50	-2	+10	
32404	G Petric	Rangers	2.50	0	+4	
32501	J Newsome	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00	-3	-3	
32502	D Walker	Sheffield Wednesday	0.50	0	+1	
32503	B Linighan	Sheffield Wednesday	0.25	0	0	
32601	K Monkou	Southampton	1.50	0	0	
32602	A Nelson	Southampton	1.00	-1	-1	
32603	R Dryden	Southampton	0.50	-1	-1	
32604	C Lundekvam	Southampton	0.50	0	+1	
32701	A McVie	Sunderland	1.00	0	+13	
32702	K Ball	Sunderland	1.00	0	+12	
32703	R Ord	Sunderland	0.50	0	+14	
32801	T Campbell	Tottenham Hotspur	2.50	0	+13	
32802	C Calderwood	Tottenham Hotspur	2.50	+4	+10	
32803	G Mabbitt	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00	0	0	
32804	J Cundy	Tottenham Hotspur	0.50	0	0	
32805	K Scott	Tottenham Hotspur	0.50	0	0	
32806	S Nethercott	Tottenham Hotspur	0.50	0	-3	
32901	I Taylor	West Ham United	2.50	0	-1	
32902	M Rippey	West Ham United	2.50	0	-1	
32903	S Potts	West Ham United	2.00	0	-2	
32904	R Hall	West Ham United	1.50	0	0	
32905	R Ferdinand	West Ham United	0.50	0	0	
32906	A Whitbread	West Ham United	1.00	0	0	
33001	A Reeves	Wimbledon	1.00	0	0	
33002	A Pearce	Wimbledon	0.75	0	0	
33003	D Blackwell	Wimbledon	0.50	0	0	
33004	B McAllister	Wimbledon	0.50	-1	+12	
33005	S Fitzgerald	Wimbledon	0.25	0	0	

Code	Name	Team	Em	Wk	Ch
40504	P Grant	Celtic	1.50	+2	-8
40505	R di Canio	Celtic	3.00	-2	+11
40601	P Smith	Celtic	3.50	0	0
40602	D Wiles	Celtic	0.75	0	0
40603	G Peacock	Celtic	2.50	0	+1
40604	C Burley	Celtic	2.00	0	+10
40605	E Newton	Celtic	2.00	+1	+1
40607	D Rocastle	Celtic	0.50	0	0
40608	R di Matteo	Celtic	3.00	+3	+15
40609	J Morris	Coventry City	0.50	0	0
40701	J Salek	Coventry City	2.50	+1	+12
41501	G McAllister	Coventry City	5.50	+1	+11
40702	E Jess	Coventry City	2.00	+1	+5
40703	K Richardson	Coventry City	1.50	+1	+8
40704	P Telfer	Coventry City	1.50	+1	+7
40705	P Williams	Coventry City	1.50	0	+2
40706	M Lewis	Coventry City	0.50	0	0
40707	W Boland	Coventry City	0.25	0	0
40708	M O'Neill	Coventry City	1.50	0	+1
40801	A Asanovic	Derby County	2.00	+1	+11
40802	P Simpson	Derby County	1.50	0	+2
40803	R van der Laan	Derby County	1.50	0	+2
40804	D Powell	Derby County	1.00	+1	+7
40805	S Fynn	Derby County	0.50	0	0
40807	G Rowett	Derby County	0.50	+1	+8
40809	C Dailly	Derby County	1.50	+1	+11
40901	G McSwegan	Dundee United	2.00	+2	+14
40902	R Winters	Dundee United	1.50	0	+3
40903	G Johnson	Dundee United	1.00	0	0
42303	J McNally	Dundee United	0.75	+3	+3
40904	D Bowden	Dundee United	2.00	0	+2
40905	A Bennekner	Dundee United	0.50	0	+2
41001	H French	Dunfermline	1.00	+1	+9
41002	C Robertson	Dunfermline	1.00	+1	+7
41003	A Smith	Dunfermline	0.75	0	+9
41004	D Fleming	Dunfermline	0.50	+1	+14
41101	A Kanehalskis	Everton	7.00	+1	+14
41102	J Ebrill	Everton	4.00	+2	+14
41103	J Ebrill	Everton	1.50	0	+6
41104	J Pardoll	Everton	1.50	0	+10
41105	A Lmpar	Everton	1.50	0	+1
41106	T Grant	Everton	0.50	0	+3
41107	V Samways	Everton	0.50	0	0
41201	A McManus	Hartlepool	1.50	+2	+2
41202	S Fulton	Hartlepool	1.00	0	+2
41301	K McAllister	Hibernian	1.50	0	+7
41302	P McGinlay	Hibernian	1.50	+1	+4
41303	G Love	Hibernian	0.75	0	0
41304	A Millen	Hibernian	0.50	-1	+9
41305	I Cameron	Hibernian	0.75	0	+1
41401	A Mitchell	Kilmarnock	1.00	+2	+7
41402	J McIntyre	Kilmarnock	1.00	+2	+6
41403	M Skilling	Kilmarnock	0.75	0	0
41404	J Lauchlan	Kilmarnock	0.50	0	+2
41502	L Bowyer	Leeds United	3.00	0	+9
41503	A Gray	Leeds United	2.50	0	+1
41504	C Palmer	Leeds United	2.00	0	+4
41505	R Wallace	Leeds United	1.50	+6	+10
41506	L Sharpe	Leeds United	3.50	+2	+13
41506	I Harte	Leeds United	1.00	0	+13
41507	M Ford	Leeds United	0.50	+2	+8
41508	A Couzens	Leeds United	0.50	+2	+8
41509	M Tinkler	Leeds United	0.50	0	+2
41601	N Lennon	Leeds United	2.00	+1	+9
41602	G Parker	Leicester City	2.00	+1	+2
41603	S Taylor	Leicester City	2.00	0	+9
41604	J Lawrence	Leicester City	0.25	0	0
40606	M Izzet	Leicester City	1.00	+1	+10
41701	S McManaman	Liverpool	7.00	+1	+18
41702	J McAbner	Liverpool	4.00	+1	+10
41703	J Redknapp	Liverpool	4.50	0	+1
41704	J Barnes	Liverpool	3.00	+1	+17
41705	M Thomas	Liverpool	2.50	0	+15
41706	M Kennedy	Liverpool	1.00	0	0
41707	P Berger	Liverpool	3.00	+1	+13
41801	R Giggs	Manchester United	7.00	0	+10
41802	N Lennon	Manchester United	4.50	0	+1
41803	D Beckham	Manchester United	4.00	+4	+17
41804	N Butt	Manchester United	3.50	+2	+8
41806	B McClair	Manchester United	1.50	0	+2
41807	T Cooke	Manchester United	1.00	0	0
41808	B Thornley	Manchester United	1.00	0	0
41809	M Davies	Manchester United	0.50	0	0
41810	J Cruyff	Manchester United	2.50	+2	+15
41811	K Poborsky	Manchester United	4.00	+1	+8
41901	Emerson	Middlesbrough	3.50	0	+8
41902	Juninho	Middlesbrough	3.50	0	+15
41903	C Higginet	Middlesbrough	2.00	0	0
41904	A McAtee	Middlesbrough	1.00	0	0
40906	R Mustoe	Middlesbrough	1.00	0	+7
41908	C Liddle	Middlesbrough	0.50	0	0
41909	B Robson	Middlesbrough	0.50	0	0
41910	P Stamp	Middlesbrough	0.50	0	+3
42001	C McCart	Motherwell	2.00	0	+3
42002	J Phillips	Motherwell	2.00	+1	+1
42003	D McCall	Motherwell	1.00	0	+4
42004	J Hendry	Motherwell	0.75	+1	+1

NEWS

Speaker urges full sleaze inquiry

■ The Speaker increased pressure on the Government over the cash-for-questions affair by demanding a full and speedy investigation into "very serious" allegations made over the past three weeks.

Betty Boothroyd's intervention on the Commons' first day after the summer recess means that the parliamentary watchdog is likely to get more staff and other resources for a wide-ranging inquiry over several months. **Pages 1, 2, 11, 20, 21**

Mowlam pleads with jailed terrorists

■ Mo Mowlam, the Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary, tried to shore up the loyalist ceasefire by meeting 12 Protestant paramilitary inmates at Maze prison. They told her that their ceasefire would be maintained only if London and Dublin clamped down on the IRA. **Page 1**

Cullen eschews ban

Lord Cullen is believed to have stepped back from calling for a total ban on handguns in his report on the Dunblane massacre, which has been delivered to the Government. **Page 1**

Global cooling

A sharp cooling of the planet occurred this year, reversing the warming trend that began in the early 1980s, Meteorological Office scientists said. **Page 1**

Backing for Birt

John Birt's shake-up of the BBC World Service was broadly endorsed by Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, in the face of widespread criticism of the reforms. **Page 2**

Drug test failed

Mark Toot, Britain's Olympic bobsleigh driver, has been banned from the sport for life after testing positive for anabolic steroids. **Page 3**

Promotion doubts

The second most senior officer in the Army could be beaten to its top post of Chief of the General Staff in a string of Defence Ministry appointments. **Page 4**

Merson on his own

The footballer Paul Merson and his wife disclosed that their six-year marriage had collapsed under the strain of his recovery from addictions to drugs, alcohol and gambling. **Page 5**

Muddy voyage through time

■ A boat enthusiast who, 21 years ago, dug out a derelict Victorian yacht from the mud of an Essex estuary with his bare hands has been told that the vessel could now be worth more than £1 million. Edward VII and the future George V are believed to have been among those who were entertained on board the *Sorceress*. **Page 7**

Mercy killer freed

A man who killed his brother to end his suffering from a degenerative illness walked free from court after his case was described as exceptional. **Page 8**

Block on diabetic

A diabetic man has been refused permission to emigrate with his family to Australia because he may impose too heavy a burden on the country's health system. **Page 9**

'Le Trib' cuts costs

The *International Herald Tribune*, the American newspaper which first began publishing in Paris more than 100 years ago, may soon be driven back to the United States by high costs in France. **Page 12**

Anti-EU vote

A group fiercely opposed to European integration made the strongest gains in Austria's European Parliament elections. **Page 13**

Clinton fallout

Two of President Clinton's top advisers, George Stephanopoulos and Defence Secretary William Perry, disclosed that they may not serve in a second Clinton Administration. **Page 16**

Warlords target Kabul

Forces opposing Taleban met in the strategic Salang Pass to discuss moving south to capture Kabul, the Afghan capital, from the Islamic militia. **Page 17**



Seeing spots: part of the ready-to-wear collection by the Japanese designer Junko Koshino on the catwalk in Paris yesterday

BUSINESS

Euro conflict: Kenneth Clarke put Britain at odds with Germany and many other EU members over single currency plans. **Page 21**

Bounce back: Stephen Hinchliffe, whose collapsed Fada empire is being investigated by the Serious Fraud Office, is using a £50 million German shoe chain to fund a possible return to the business arena. **Page 27**

Economy: Encouraging figures on industrial costs and prices helped the stock market to hit another record high. **Page 27**

Markets: The FT-SE 100 rose 11.9 to close at 4040.0. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 87.8 to 88.0 after a rise from \$1.575 to \$1.5795 and from DM2.4124 to DM2.4158. **Page 30**

SPORT

Rugby union: The Scottish Rugby Union has banned an Edinburgh Academicals prop for four years for serious foul play. The player may face criminal charges. **Page 47**

Football: Mark Bosnich, the Aston Villa goalkeeper, has been charged with misconduct by the FA for his offensive salute to Tottenham Hotspur supporters. **Page 52**

Motor racing: Damon Hill, the 1996 Formula One champion, has been riding on the Bullet Train between Nagoya and Tokyo, celebrating his title victory. Oliver Holt joined him. **Page 52**

Racing: The Derby is to have a supplementary entry stage for the first time in its 216-year history, to ensure participation of the best horses. **Page 46**

ARTS

Oxford honours: After a £4 million lottery-funded facelift and several narrow escapes, the Oxford Playhouse is to reopen tomorrow with a world premiere. **Page 36**

Classical choice: The weekly guide to building a record library looks at Wagner's *Parsifal*, and Karajan takes the honours with the Berlin Philharmonic. **Page 37**

Rubens in the country: The National Gallery shifts its focus from fat ladies to Rubens's stunning landscapes in an important new exhibition. **Page 37**

Power struggle: For once the soprano takes a back seat as servant and master assume command in Glyndebourne's touring production of Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*. **Page 38**

FEATURES

Don't look back: Pamela Bordes and Andrew Neil, former Editor of *The Sunday Times*, were lovers in 1989. She feels no fondness for his autobiography. **Page 18**

The Second Sex? In day two: did men need to think of women as weak in order to feel strong? Maureen Freely on results of feminism: Giles Coren on manliness: Lotte Hughes on warriors. **Page 19**

New Supreme Court? Are the Lords of Appeal in Ordinary (their full title) becoming more extraordinary? Plus this year's Times Law Awards. **Page 39**

Protecting old age: The new laws governing occupational pensions are causing upheaval within the industry. **Page 41**

On the doorstep: Businesses in the North East are spoilt for choice when it comes to finding commercial lawyers. **Page 45**

LAW

Joerg Haider, with his ultranationalism and his sneering approach to European integration, has achieved a better result in the Austrian elections to the European Parliament than even he could have hoped for. His steady electoral progression, with its basis in hostility to a Europe directed from Brussels, should give cause for thought to other members of the EU. — ABC, Madrid

LETTERS

Church of England recruitment; paedophile register; sentencing policy; Peter Thurnham, MP. Page 21



TOMORROW

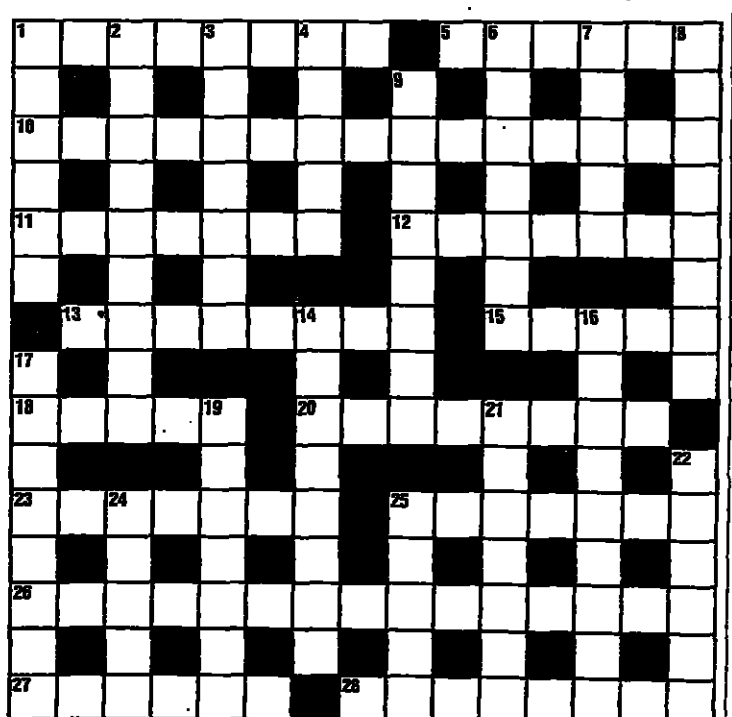
IN THE TIMES

■ **FASHION**
Iain R. Webb, fashion journalist of the year, on his impressions of the Paris catwalks

■ **PROPERTY**
How to live like a lord: Rachel Kelly on renting historic homes



THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,299



- ACROSS**
- Anchor and take in sail, unloading last of fish meal (8).
 - It may be added to the drink display (6).
 - Bark, presumably, was willing to do thus as promised (7,3,5).
 - Early childhood's current delusion (7).
 - Escaping charge, possibly, for unauthorised disclosure (7).
 - Soldier escorting sweetheart in dance (8).
 - Bovine of inferior quality (5).
 - The verse Frost recited (5).
 - Roguish as Conservative in mass meeting (8).
 - Criterion, perhaps, for scene of operations (7).
 - Adopt half of them and provide support (7).
 - Cling to remote possibility, punning novelist's family in conflict (4,7,4).
- DOWN**
- Seek ways to make appointments (6).
 - Bitter lot almost destroyed book (8).
 - Clove material? Buy it for a child (6).
 - Perform notes framed by French composer in a melancholy manner (9).
 - Poison English archdeacon holding new honour (7).
 - Almost start off before time (5).
 - Supply of tobacco that depended on Napoleon? (7).
 - Member carrying round a bouquet (5).
 - Lodging-place helots treated extremely roughly (8).
 - Ship bearing greeting over wide and dangerous waters (8).
 - Scandinavian nominates little fellow for a rise (8).
 - Discuss changing leader for this informal note (9).
 - Whimsical fancy revealed in note (8).
 - One may still be an outsider, however (7).
 - Person who judges the cooking of rabbit (7).
 - Try excessively when speaking to this matter (6).
 - Purposeless and discontented? (5).
 - Rotten nuisance, bearing such boredom (5).
- Solution to Puzzle No 20,298**
- PLAYOFF DITCHER
RACED BOWDOOM
INTERBOWDOOM
DISSENTIER COSRA
O S N I S
TOWNS BRACICATE
O S N I S
ROVARISS GRAIL
O N O R A
LEGE SPRIGHTLY
L N O R M E
MINIATURE EJECT
O S N I S
PRETEND TRESTLE
- Times Two Crossword, page 52**

TIMES WEATHERCALL

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0811 500 followed by the appropriate code

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